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This thesis assesses the future of Mexican civil-military relations. Mexico is unique among Latin American nations for its professionalized and depoliticized military. While the Mexican Armed Forces have shunned an active role in politics since 1940, they continue to rely on the hegemonic political party, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional, or PRI, for power and prestige. This dictates a close and mutually-supportive working relationship. Within the next 20 years, however, the PRI is likely to lose its hegemonic position to increasing political opposition, severely straining the military's 60-year tradition of loyalty to both its Constitution and party. The military will be pressured to take on a more dynamic political role with the demise of its long-standing patron. This thesis demonstrates that the Mexican Armed Forces are likely to resist this temptation to repoliticize.

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The Mexican Military And Political Transition

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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from the

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December 1992

ABSTRACT

This thesis assesses the future of Mexican civil-military relations. Mexico is unique among Latin American nations for its professionalized and depoliticized military. While the Mexican Armed Forces have shunned an active role in politics since 1940, they continue to rely on the hegemonic political party, the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*, or PRI, for power and prestige. This dictates a close and mutually-supportive working relationship. Within the next 20 years, however, the PRI is likely to lose its hegemonic position to increasing political opposition, severely straining the military's 60-year tradition of loyalty to both its Constitution and party. The military will be pressured to take on a more dynamic political role with the demise of its long-standing patron. This thesis demonstrates that the Mexican Armed Forces are likely to resist this temptation to repoliticize.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This thesis examines the challenges Mexico's armed forces will face as the country's ruling party loses its hegemony to growing political opposition. This transition will probably occur at the presidential level within the next 20 years, severely straining the military's tradition of loyalty both to its political party, the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*, or PRI, and to the Republic. The military will be pressured to take on a more dynamic political role with the loss of its benefactor of 60 years, the PRI president. This thesis focuses on the likely responses of Mexico's military to this transition, demonstrating through the application of Wayne Cornelius and Ann Craig's model that Mexico's armed forces will resist both internal and external pressures to repoliticize.

The thesis begins with a review and application of Latin American civil-military literature to modern Mexico. This is followed by a brief analysis of the Mexican Revolution (1911-1917) and the high political profile of early post-Revolutionary military leaders. Analysis of the military presidents' voluntary subordination of the armed forces to civil rule follows, laying the groundwork for an examination of the potential for and probability of military intervention.

The crux of this work is the modification and application of Cornelius and Craig's four scenarios for Mexico's future as

presented in their 1991 monograph, The Mexican Political System in Transition San Diego: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, Univ. of Ca.. Initially these scenarios were not applied to the military. This thesis, however, analyzes the scenarios in considerably more detail. Each scenario is presented on a continuum of likelihood for military repoliticization, from the most to least likely. Each is then divided into its basic factors and the military response to each factor is predicted, based on the history, motivations and self-perceptions of Mexico's military leadership.

The first of these four scenarios is Political Closure. Its definition includes economic crisis through failure of the Mexico's open-market model. The political and social costs of choosing to close Mexico's political system in order to maintain hegemony are judged in this thesis to be excessive, even for an embattled PRI. Political closure is thus an extremely unattractive and unlikely political alternative. Still, it remains the scenario most capable of precipitating a military split from the PRI government and subsequent military repoliticization.

The second scenario, Immobilism, is somewhat more politically credible. Characterized by political impasse and government freeze, immobilism effectively stalemates both the PRI and opposition parties. The likelihood of immobilism in Mexico is greater than that of political closure, but remains

relatively remote. The scenario carries some decreased potential for renewed military activism.

The third scenario, Modernized Authoritarianism, illustrates the most viable PRI response to an impending loss of the presidency, and is identified by government reversion to harsher measures. While resulting in a revitalized PRI, it could throw military loyalty into a quandary. The armed forces would most likely support the PRI unless tasked to physically impose PRI will on a recalcitrant public. This thesis establishes modernized authoritarianism as the most likely scenario when PRI political hegemony is threatened. It carries a slightly increased potential for military repoliticization.

The last and most politically liberal scenario, Limited Power Sharing, posits a PRI agenda of free elections to determine local and state representation while ensuring continued PRI hegemony at the national level. This scenario can ensure only short-term political capital for the PRI, and thus remains an improbable option for the PRI. Limited power sharing entails the least threat of remilitarization.

This thesis addresses both Mexico's democratic reform and political stability as the next 20 years pose a myriad of social, political and economic changes. How the PRI party leadership responds to its political transition from hegemony to dominance will be critical in deciding the future political role of the country's armed forces. The thesis demonstrates

that Mexico's military leadership will most likely reject an increased political role, preferring to maintain subordination and loyalty to the Constitution and the Republic.

I. INTRODUCTION

Mexico is unique among Latin American nations for its professionalized and de-politicized military. While the Mexican Armed Forces have shunned an active role in politics for over 50 years, their continued reliance on the civilian government for power and prestige has dictated a close and mutually-supportive working relationship. As such, the Mexican Army, Navy, and Air Force maintain a viable but non-decision making role in politics, supporting the one-party government system which has ruled uninterrupted since 1929. Despite a negligible international military role, Mexico's Armed Forces have managed to professionalize and maintain a traditionally military, rather than constabulary presence. This role may be threatened, however, by the emergence of new and unconventional military missions.

This thesis begins with a review of the applicable modern civil-military literature in Chapter II and an overview of Mexico's post-Revolutionary political and military evolution in Chapter III. Chapter IV briefly sketches current relations between Mexico's civil government and military leadership, and explores both the probability of and potential grounds for intervention. Thus the stage is set for Chapter V to focus on the political future of Mexico's military. The primary peril

to continued military subordination under a changing civil government is the strain Mexico's armed forces will face as the hegemonic *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI)[1] loses its position of preeminence. Increasing political opposition and growing public support for the conservative *Partido de Accion Nacional* (PAN)[2] and the liberal factions as represented by the coalition *Partido Revolucionario Democratico* (PRD)[3] will continue to grow.

At some point in the future, arguably within the next 20 years, the PRI will probably lose its long-standing residence in the Presidential Palace. At that time the question will be raised, who will the military support? Will it follow the precepts of the Constitution and support a non-PRI government? Or will its loyalty to the PRI, so long identified as the true embodiment of the Revolution, outweigh fealty to the nation? The military's reaction to this probable demise of the predominant political power in Mexico can be analyzed and

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[1] National Revolutionary Party.

[2] National Action Party.

[3] Revolutionary Democratic Party. The PRD has emerged from the leftist coalition known as the National Democratic Front, or FDN, which won unprecedented popular support for an opposition candidate in the 1988 presidential election. For an excellent analysis of the rise of the FDN, see Peter H. Smith, "The 1988 Presidential Succession in Historical Perspective," especially the section entitled "The Campaign." Mexico's Alternative Political Futures. Wayne A. Cornelius, Judith Gentleman, and Peter H. Smith (eds). (San Diego: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, Univ. of Ca, 1989.) pp. 403-411.

anticipated by using an expanded version of the four scenarios formulated by Wayne Cornelius and Ann Craig in their 1991 monograph.[4] These have been developed, modified, and applied to civil-military relations. The potential for a re-politicization of the military is addressed in the context of each scenario, as is the role of Mexico's military in the future of Mexican politics. Chapter VI then assesses both the historic and current levels of U.S. influence on the Mexican military and explores the implications of a Mexican remilitarization on U.S.-Mexican relations.

In order to fully comprehend the political implications of the threat posed by a loss of PRI hegemony and the military's scope of options in dealing with it, an understanding of applicable civil-military theory is required, as is a working knowledge of the political evolution of Mexico's post-Revolutionary military. These are the subjects of the next two chapters.

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[4] Wayne A. Cornelius and Ann L. Craig. The Mexican Political System in Transition. (San Diego: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, Univ. of Ca, 1991.)

II. SETTING THE THEORETICAL STAGE

This chapter will focus first on defining the term "military professionalization." The second section will then review relevant portions of existing civil-military literature and apply it to post-Revolutionary Mexico. The third and final portion will demonstrate the validity of both Mexico's classification as maintaining a professionalized military and the pertinence of the reviewed literature to Mexico's unique case.

A. DEFINING MILITARY PROFESSIONALIZATION

Perhaps the most important baseline to establish early in this thesis is a working definition of military professionalization. The term has been used to encompass a wide variety of traits and institutions.[1] Edwin Lieuwen writes that a professionalized military is a depoliticized military, but this broad definition does not take into account the expectations and motivations which are part of any professionalized armed force. Frederick Nunn proposes

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[1] Jose Luis Pineyro writes of the "lack of agreement over what constitute(s) "professionalization"" of the Mexican armed forces and the variables which must be taken into account. See his essay, "The Modernization of the Mexican Armed Forces." Democracy Under Siege: New Military Power in Latin America. Agosto Varas (ed). (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989.) p. 125.

professionalism is based on "the propensity and willingness to apply solutions based in a deeply traditional military ethos to national problems," and the depth of this commitment is reflective of the "thought and self-perception of the officer corps."[7] For the purposes of this thesis, a professionalized military is defined as one which has a defined rank structure separate from the civil government hierarchy, maintains a viable professional training and education program, and allows advancement on military merit rather than political connections.

After the Revolution, Mexico's military underwent a profound change, becoming smaller and more professionalized, and eventually totally subordinated under the "far-reaching powers"[8] of the president as commander-in-chief. Military professionalism has in the past been at least partially defined as

> decreased political intervention. The idea is that professionalism leads to a military esprit de corps, a dedication to pursuit of purely military activities, and an eschewing of political activity on both moral and practical grounds... (T)his intense military activity

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[7] Frederick M. Nunn. "On the Role of the Military in Twentieth Century Latin America: The Mexican Case." The Modern Mexican Military: A Reassessment. David Ronfeldt (ed). (San Diego: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, Univ. of Ca, 1984.) pp. 44-45.

[7] Nunn in Ronfeldt (1984). p. 45.

[8] Adrian J. English. The Armed Forces of Latin America. (London: Jane's Publishing Co, Ltd, 1984.) p. 302.

> keeps the armed forces so busy that they have no leisure for political mischief.

That is, one expected result of professionalism is a decreased probability of political intervention. John Johnson agrees, adding that the professionalization of militaries makes them less attractive to elites seeking a potential source of power.[7]

In addition, an important component of defining professionalism in the Mexican case is the general conviction of military officers that while they are servants of the political system, they remain morally above its inherent corruption. This translates to an unwillingness to soil the armed services with the "dirt" of politics, and a separation of military and political powers. This has proven advantageous to both the armed forces and the PRI in promoting a subordinated and professionalized military.

The physical downsizing of the armed forces by successive post-Revolutionary Mexican Presidents, linked with their depoliticization, has resulted in a modern military which has

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Edwin Lieuwen "Depoliticization of the Mexican Revolutionary Army, 1915-1940." In Ronfeldt (1984.) pp. 53-54. Lieuwen notes that his theory of decreased threat levels for political intervention with increased levels of military professionalism is a contentious one, as has been noted here.

[7] John L. Johnson. "Political Change in Latin America: The Emergence of the Middle Sectors." Promise of Development: Theories of Change in Latin America. Peter F. Klaren and Thomas J. Bossert (eds). (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986.) p. 98.

little interest in assuming the reins of political power. The trend continued until the 1980s, when the Mexican military was increasingly tasked with internal, and non-traditional missions, and the civilian elite accepted this as proper and desirable behavior. In 1989, when Bryan Kelley wrote, "(t)he Mexican armed forces are ever increasing their level of professionalism,"[11] the stresses and strains of internal threats and political competition were already beginning to affect the professional performance of the military. This must be considered a contributing factor behind the increased military-as-constabulary involvement in the 1988 elections, as will be shown in Chapter III.

B. APPLYING THE LITERATURE

Mexico is unique among Latin American nations in its development of a professionalized, co-opted military. Much of the existing literature on Latin American civil-military relations has ignored Mexico because of this uniqueness. Juan Rial admonishes his academic colleagues who tend to generalize about Latin American militaries and their political roles, and calls for individual consideration of each nation's

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[11] Bryan C. Kelley. "The Future of the Mexican Political System." (Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Ca; 1989.) Unpublished. p. 56.

situation.[12] While little has been written directly dealing with modern Mexico's civil-military relations, much of the existing, broader literature can be applied.

Nunn maintains "(t)here is simply no consensus on the present role of the Mexican military."[13] Indeed, disputes exist among experts in the field on many aspects, including whether professionalized militaries are more or less likely to intervene in domestic government affairs. Samuel Huntington,[14] Adolfo Zinser,[15] Edwin Lieuwen[16] and Louis Goodman[17] are among those who support the theory that "increasing professionalism correlates with decreasing political intervention."[18] These

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[12] Juan Rial. "The Armed Forces and the Question of Democracy." The Military and Democracy: The Future of Civil-Military Relations in Latin America. Louis W. Goodman, Johanna S.R. Mendelson and Juan Rial (eds). (Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books, 1990.)

[13] Nunn in Ronfeldt (1984.) p. 35.

[14] Samuel P. Huntington gives his prescription for "Curbing Military Power (and) Promoting Military Professionalism" in his 1990 book, The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century. (Norman and London: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1990.) p. 251-254. He also discussed the political role of professional soldiers in The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations. (Cambridge, Mass: Howard Univ. Press, 1957.)

[15] Adolfo Aguilar Zinser. "Civil-Military Relations in Mexico." In Goodman, Mendelson, and Rial. p. 222.

[16] Lieuwen in Ronfeldt (1984.) p. 53. Lieuwen notes that Alfred Vagts and Samuel Huntington agree with his thesis that "increasing professionalism correlates with decreasing political intervention."

[17] Louis W. Goodman. "The Military and Democracy." In Goodman, Mendelson, and Rial.

[18] Lieuwen in Ronfeldt (1984). p. 53.

Latin Americanists would agree that Mexico's armed forces are not likely to intervene in government despite a potential loss of prestige and high-level access because they do not wish to jeopardize their military professionalism. The opposing school of thought includes such prominent names as Alfred Stepan,[1] Guillermo O'Donnell,[2] and Samuel Finer,[3] who would postulate that it is precisely such professionalism which endangers the continuance of civil rule. Each of these men addresses certain factors in his writing at variance with his fellow political scientists. O'Donnell, for example contends that while professionalized militaries are less likely to intervene in politics than their less capable compatriots, once in power a professionalized force is more likely to retain an overt political role. Stepan agrees that even professionalized Latin American armies which are consumed with internal security missions, as Mexico's are, are more likely to intervene in politics than are militaries focused on external missions.

The former school of thought was in vogue until broken by the disillusionment which accompanied the 1960s

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[1] Ibid. p. 54. Also see Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan (eds). The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1978.)

[2] Guillermo O'Donnell, Phillippe C. Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead (eds). Transitions From Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1986.)

[3] These three names are also cited by Lieuwen as disagreeing with his own thesis. Lieuwen in Ronfeldt (1984.) p. 53-54.

remilitarization of much of Latin America. Abraham Lowenthal writes of the literature prior to that time,

> (i)t was assumed (or at least hoped) that military involvement in Latin America [sic] politics would decline as socioeconomic modernization and mobilization occurred, as armies became more "professional," and as the influence of announced United States support for democratic regimes made itself felt.[22]

He also maintains this was further disproved by yet another "wave" of Latin American remilitarization in the 1980s. Augosto Varas contends that it is professionalism which causes politicized Latin American militaries to "retreat to the barracks"[23] when faced with a crisis of mission: In this scenario, difficult political decisions render a ruling military unable to reconcile its military and government missions. The military leadership thus eventually backs away from its political role in favor of maintaining "institutional continuity."[24]

Zinser and David Ronfeldt hold that the Mexican military has no political aspirations of its own, but could conceivably

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[22] Abraham F. Lowenthal. "Armies and Politics in Latin America: Introduction to the First Edition." Armies and Politics in Latin America. Abraham F. Lowenthal and J. Samuel Fitch (eds). (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1986.) p. 4.

[23] Augosto Varas. "Civil-Military Relations in a Democratic Framework." In Goodman, Mendelson and Rial. p. 202.

[24] Ibid.

be used by another entity (perhaps a disaffected civilian elite?) to act as a surrogate to usurp government power. Alden Cunningnam agrees that "nothing short of total governmental collapse would cause the Mexican military to take the reigns [sic] of power which it relinquished to civilian control in the 1940s."[26]

According to Zinser, the potential for military repression increases when militaries are tasked with domestic missions.[27] This acts as a deprofessionalizing influence, demoralizing the armed forces and giving at least the perception of pitting civilian authorities against their own military. Such a failure to accommodate the military's future needs may be studies in terms of such frameworks of understanding as Irma Adelman's theory of "rank disequilibrium."[28] Adelman maintains that when the relative position of a social class or strata is inequivalent with its political stature, it will seek its own level of equilibrium.

One factor leading to civil destabilization and the subsequent politicization of Latin American militaries, as

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[26] Lt. Col. Alden M. Cunningham. "Mexico's National Security in the 1980s-1990s." In Ronfeldt (1984.) p. 172.

[27] Zinser in Goodman, Mendelson, and Rial. pp. 229-232.

[28] Irma Adelman and Jairus M. Hihn. "Politics in Latin America: A Catastrophe Theory Model." Journal of Conflict Resolution. December 1982. p. 595. as noted by Kelley. p. 68.

seen by both Karen Remmer[29] and Huntington,[30] is extreme economic inequality. Mexico's PRI government has dealt with this in an original manner. It is generally accepted that the potential for military and civil rebellion increases when a society is rife with at least the *perception* of gross inequality. This was the case in pre-Revolutionary Mexico, with the distinction between the "haves" and the "have nots" clear and virtually unbroachable. Minimal opportunities for social mobility were a great contributor to widespread peasant support which fueled the Revolution. The inclusionary post-Revolutionary system has, however, actively sought to incorporate the disadvantaged sectors of its civil society, thereby ensuring their loyalty and procuring a measure of stability for the state. Huntington terms this "a new unifying social myth and basis for legitimacy"[30] provided by the Mexican Revolution. Such an incorporation of many different social sectors under one political party is unique to the Mexican system, as it seeks to co-opt and provide some level of social equality for all of its citizens.

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[29] Karen L. Remmer. Military Rule in Latin America. (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989.)

[30] Samuel P. Huntington. "Will More Countries Become Democratic?" Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings (7th Ed). Roy C. Macridis and Bernard E. Brown (eds). (Pacific Grove, Ca: Brooks\Cole Publishing Co, 1990.) pp. 81-100.

[30] Samuel P. Huntington. Political Order in Changing Societies. (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1968.) p. 317.

Remmer's association of exclusionary regimes with low and advanced socio-economic levels, and inclusionary regimes with mid-level development can be directly applied to Mexico's civilian government. As a result of the Revolution and a commitment to unification of the nation, the PRI has co-opted as many sectors of civil society as possible and effectively incorporated the military. This has resulted in the modern inclusionary system perpetuated by the government and embraced by its loyal servants, including the military.

C. MEXICO'S UNIQUE CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

Since its Revolution (1911-1917), Mexico's government has acted independently of the traditional Latin American model in its methods of ensuring the long-term success of its authoritarian system. Through co-optation and incorporation, Mexico's PRI government has allowed forces outside of government circles to succeed in bringing about "policy innovation... (and) marked changes in government policy despite their largely closed system."[31] With the advent of widespread "industrialization, urbanization, and educational attainment,"[32] the probability that a military will assume an exclusionary or oligarchical form declines in favor of an

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[31] Michael W. Foley. "Agenda for Mobilization: The Agrarian Question and Popular Mobilization in Contemporary Mexico." Latin American Research Review (LARR), Volume 26, Number 2, 1991. p. 39.

[32] Remmer, p. 10.

inclusionary system.

This may be applied to the PRI elites' 60-year history of co-optation: While not a military government per se, Mexico's post-Revolutionary authoritarian system has worked to preserve its position by adapting and co-opting potential adversaries. Ronfeldt views the Mexican military as retaining a "residual political role, one of conflict management amidst institutional crisis."[33] Arnaldo Vela suggests that the PRI commitment to incorporation led to its acceptance of a minor but legitimate limited power-sharing with opposition parties, but that the PRI did not intend for the opposition to usurp PRI hegemony.[34] This commitment to corporatism, therefore, is the instrument of the PRI's demise, and is of its own making. Without this vehicle for assimilation of non-PRI supporters, however, the legitimacy of the PRI itself would have been undermined and its responsiveness to its constituency diminished. The responsiveness of Mexico's political elite has been appropriately characterized as

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[33] Nunn in Ronfeldt (1984). p. 36. Here Nunn cites Ronfeldt's earlier essay, "The Mexican Army and Political Order Since 1940." Contemporary Mexico: Papers of the IV International Congress of Mexican History. James W. Wilkie, Michael C. Meyer, and Edna Monzon de Wilkie (eds). (Univ. of Ca Press, Berkeley; 1976.) He also cites Howard F. Cline. Mexico: Revolution to Evolution, 1940-1960. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1962.)

[34] Arnoldo Vela. "Dominant Parties in the Service of Authoritarian Regimes: The Mexican PRI." (Los Angeles, September 1992.) Unpublished.

> (L)argely preemptive: Elites respond to perceived public demands in an effort to head off more explicit discontent... co-opting existing opposition by (making) marginal adjustments and generous side payments.

In the future this may not be so easy to accomplish, but it has been a unique and extremely successful modus operandi for over half a century.

To summarize, Mexico "provides us with an anomaly,"[35] remaining unique in that its government has proven willing and able to continually maneuver, shifting programs and positions as its civil support requires. In defining professionalism, this chapter has provided a baseline for further discussion of the role of Mexico's military in the country's political future. The subsequent theoretical comparison of 1950s and 1960s Latin American civil-military literature with the writings of more recent political scientists gives the student a solid foundation from which to assess Mexico's impending crisis, the loss of PRI hegemony. Lastly, this chapter has clearly demonstrated the adaptability of the Mexican one-party political system to changing circumstances.

Historically, this flexibility has been an asset to the

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[35] Foley in LARR, p. 41. Alan Knight makes a similar assessment in his essay, "Mexico's Elite Settlement: Conjuncture and Consequences." Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe. John Higley and Richard Gunther (eds). (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1992.) pp. 113-145.

[36] Nunn in Ronfeldt (1984). p. 47.

PRI in maintaining its broad power base. Societies are, by their nature, in a constant state of change, and Mexico is no exception. The literature which has been applied in this brief review shows that although the experts in the fields of political science and civil-military relations do not necessarily agree on a framework within which to study the Mexican case, each contributes in some way to an understanding of the whole. It is evident from their work that most believe Mexican politics to be both unique and headed for a major change. The historical perspective presented in the next chapter will explore the factors of modern civil-military relations, thus providing a basis for understanding the changes Mexico will face into the 21st century.

III. LAYING THE GROUNDWORK - THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

> For a country of Mexico's importance, its army is one of the least studied in Latin America. Indeed the contemporary Mexican military may be the most difficult such institution to research in Latin America. Certainly it is the most difficult national institution to research in Mexico... Without new fieldwork the roles and contributions of one of Mexico's most important national institutions will likely remain the target of rumor more than serious analysis.[37]

It is true that little is known of the Mexican military. The reason for this lack of information appears not to stem from a lack of academic interest, but rather from an institutionalized secrecy which pervades the military structure. Even "routine activities" tend to be classified "as highly sensitive and subject to security restrictions."[38] A considerable amount of work has been done on the Mexican government, yet despite its importance the military's political position within that system remains relatively unknown.

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[37] David F. Ronfeldt. "The Mexican Army and Political Order Since 1940." In Ronfeldt (1984.) p. 68.

[38] Stephen W. Wager. The Mexican Army, 1940-1982: The Country Comes First. (Dissertation, Stanford Univ; 1992.) p. 6.

A. THE EVOLUTION OF THE MILITARY IN POST-REVOLUTIONARY MEXICO

The role of the military in Mexico's post-Revolutionary restructuring has been minimal. This may have been caused by the absence of external threats, and may also be partially due to the PRI's long-standing commitments to non-intervention and international self-determinism. Whatever the reason, Mexico maintains "the least politicized military in Latin America, the country relying implicitly on the United States for its defence against external enemies." [9] The United States would not permit an outside actor to draw Mexico into conflict, as this would lead to instability on its own southern border. In addition, Mexico's role in Central America has been such that interstate conflicts have been resolved through political, not military, means and thus have not escalated into warfare.[10] The country's commitment to ideological plurality also reflects an increased tolerance of differing doctrine in the state governments of the region, provided legitimacy is maintained through popular domestic consensus. Thus Mexico has kept its role as a regional elder statesman and peacemaker without relying on military enforcement of its will.

The distinctive social position of Mexico's military

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[9] English. p. 302.

[10] For a more detailed look at Mexico's role in the region, see this author's recent essay, "Influencing Central America: Mexico as a Regional Leader." (Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Ca; Spring 1992.) Unpublished.

forces is evident by any standard. Indeed, the entire government represents "a unique case in Latin America of stability and development,"[41] due to the form and substance of the post-Revolutionary state structure. The shape Mexico has taken since its Revolution is singular in its precepts of political inclusion. It is generally accepted that the long and bloody Revolution did not significantly alter the social or state structure: Government merely assumed a new, adaptable form, able to coopt and incorporate large sectors of previously disenfranchised Mexican society. Likewise, the Revolution "did not destroy the authoritarian nature of Mexican political life, it modernized it,"[42] and the position of the armed forces was modified from a "predatory" to a less pervasive and more "irregular" role.[43]

1. Generals as Presidents

In the aftermath of this Civil War, a new, professional role was forged for Mexico's military by its military presidents. For almost 30 years following the Revolution, Mexican presidents were elected on the strength of

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[41] Lorenzo Meyer. "Historical Roots of the Authoritarian State in Mexico." Authoritarianism in Mexico. Jose Luis Reyna and Richard S. Wienert (eds). (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1977.) p. 10.

[42] Ibid. p. 4.

[43] Edward J. Williams and Freeman J. Wright. Latin American Politics: A Developmental Approach. (Palo Alto, Ca: Mayfield Publishing Co, 1975.) p. 211.

their reputations as military leaders. This occurred despite the fact that their "repudiation of caudillo politics... implied a civilian succession."[44] In fact, it was not until 1946 that a civilian president was elected. Although President Lazaro Cardenas (1934-40) is considered the force behind subordinating the Mexican military to the civil government, the down-sizing of Mexico's armed forces actually began under President Alvaro Obregon (1920-24).

In the early 1920s, Obregon cut military spending virtually in half. In only two years, he sliced the military's share of the federal budget from 61 to 35 percent. The number of active duty enlisted army and navy men fell from 200,000 to 150,000, while the officer corps suffered even more severe cuts - from 50,000 men to only 20,000. Presidents Calles and Cardenas continued the trend, whittling an even smaller and more professional military. Each of these presidents promoted literacy and professional training programs for enlisted men, as well as overseas professional and graduate-level education for officers. Perhaps the most telling indicator

> of the military's decline as a political institution is its share of the federal government budget, which dropped from 17 percent in 1940, to 5 to 6 percent in the 1970s,

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[44] Knight in Higley and Gunther. p. 123.

to 1-3 percent in the 1980s.[45]

In recent years even more "spartan budgets"[46] have been imposed on the Mexican armed forces. The latest available figures show recent military spending at its lowest point, 2.3 to 2.8 percent of Mexico's federal government expenditures in 1989, accounting for only .5 percent to .6 percent of GNP.[47] These are among the lowest levels of military spending in the world. In comparison, United States defense expenditures that same year represented 25.5 percent of total federal government spending and 5.8 percent of GNP.[48]

In the late 1930s, President Cardenas was rightly concerned that conservative military officers could bring considerable negative pressure to bear as his liberal land reform usurped properties of wealthy elites. He was able to

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[45] Wayne A. Cornelius and Ann L. Craig. "Politics in Mexico." Comparative Politics Today: A World View. Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell, jr. (eds). (Scott, Foresman, and Company, Glenview, Ill; 1988.) p. 467.

[46] Pineyro in Varas. p. 123.

[47] The lower figures, 2.3 and .5 percent, are derived from World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1990. (Washington, D.C: U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 1990.) p. 73, Table 1. The higher figures, 2.8 and .6 percent are derived from figures cited by Mark S. Hoffman (ed). The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1991. (New York: Pharos Books, 1991.) p. 733.

[48] World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1990. p. 85, Table 1. In addition, see Figure 17 on p. 20, entitled "Relative Burden(s) of Military Expenditures-1989," which clearly demonstrates the extremely low levels of military expenditures by Mexico as compared to other nations of the world.

defuse the issue, however, by further coopting the military under the executive branch. A Brigadier General himself, Cardenas "assiduously began to cultivate promising young officers"[49] whose loyalty to his liberal programs was unquestionable. He raised military salaries, increased benefits and revitalized education programs. In addition to Cardenas' newly-implemented internal military reforms, these measures served to assimilate once and for all the political interests of the armed forces leadership into the popular sector of the PRI. Before that time,

> the fortunes of Mexico's military and political leadership were so inextricably intertwined that it is difficult to distinguish the political role of one group from that of the other.[50]

Cardenas thus completed the Mexican military's depoliticization, and the armed forces were, in effect, "neutralize(d)... as a potential ally of the conservative faction within the regime that opposed (Cardenas') reform policies."[51] Cardenas increased personal compensation for officers who did not actively participate in the political

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[49] Michael C. Meyer and William L. Sherman. The Course of Mexican History, 4th Edition. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1991. p. 597.

[50] Roderic A. Camp. "Generals and Politicians in Mexico: A Preliminary Comparison." In Ronfeldt (1984.) p. 108.

[51] Cornelius and Craig in Almond and Powell. p. 466.

process, and effectively removed the armed forces from entering the public sector. His reorganization of the PRI increased the power of the popular sector as a major source of PRI support, which also helped to break the monopoly of the generals on political power.

In all, the "demilitarizing" of Mexican politics was a long and arduous process, which culminated in the election of Miguel Aleman Valdez, a civilian lawyer, in 1946.[52] Stephen Wager rightly notes, however, that "the transfer of political power to a civilian elite... could not have been accomplished without a consensus to do so by the army itself."[53] The armed forces have not sought an active political role or constituted a viable threat to civil rule since that time, despite economic crises and substantial internal mission realignment.

2. The Military as a Pillar of PRI Support

The social support base of the modern PRI consists of three distinct socio-economic "pillars." The first is labor, made up largely of urban, unionized workers, and represented by the *Confederacion de Trabajadores de Mexico*.[54] The second is the peasant class, represented by the Cardenas-inspired *Confederacion Nacional Campesina*.[55] Lastly, the *Confederacion*

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[52] Zinser in Goodman, Mendelson, and Rial. pp. 219-236.

[53] Wager. p. 3.

[54] The Mexican Workers' Confederation, or CTM.

[55] The National Peasants' Confederation, or CNC.

Nacional de Organizaciones Populares[56] represents small business owners, government employees, and other members of the middle class. While other organizations exist to represent these same interests, these three groups largely constitute the major party sectors. The military assumed an active role as a fourth pillar of PRI support for a short time in the early post-Revolutionary years, but by 1940 it was clearly subordinated to the civil government. As its needs were incorporated into popular sector, the military ceased to be viable as an external source of government support.

Looking even briefly at civilian support of the PRI, several issues beg examination. First is the "most notable feature of politics before 1987, (which) was the widespread indifference of the population toward electoral processes."[57] This changed markedly in 1988 as the Mexican public became increasingly aware of the distinction between what was promised by the PRI and what was actually provided. Party loyalty remained greatest among the older generations and less-educated, lower income Mexicans, while the conservative opposition PAN found its "strongest support among the state's

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[56] The National Confederation of Popular Organizations, or CNOP.

[57] Tonatiuh Guillen Lopez. "The Social Bases of the PRI." In Cornelius, Gentleman and Smith. p. 243. Also see Wayne A. Cornelius and Ann L. Craig, "Politics in Mexico," in Almond and Powell for further discussion of this issue.

youth."[58] The nation's more educated increasingly represent a "liberal political culture" in their support of the PAN, while the uneducated "reflect traditional political culture with its corporative negotiation and clientelism."[59] The impact of this polarization of Mexican society is a decline in the government party's ability to rely on the virtually undivided support of its three wide bases of civil support.

> The PRI no longer can assure a carro completo,[60] by winning all races for which it puts forth a candidate... (E)ven in 1987 the observed political attitudes of the population did not correspond with electoral outcomes. The poll results would lead us to expect a stronger showing from the most important opposition party, the PAN. This did not materialize. This inconsistency between expectations and electoral outcome prompts us once again to question the social legitimacy of the political system.[61]

The PRI government can, for the present, rely on the backing of the military, as shall be discussed more fully in Chapter V. The general public's disaffection with the

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[58] Survey results as reported by Lopez in Cornelius, Gentleman, and Smith. p. 245.

[59] Ibid. p. 254.

[60] This phrase is used by the author to note the important victories of the PAN, which "altered the traditional 'carro completo'" or total sweep of elections. The lengths to which the PRI has gone to secure its dominance are also noted.

[61] Lopez in Cornelius, Gentleman, and Smith. p. 249. This "inconsistency between expectations and... outcome" referred to by Lopez is explored in depth in Chapter IV of this thesis, under the section entitled "The J-Curve and Relative Deprivation."

political system which was made clear in the 1988 and 1991 elections has not resulted in a commensurate level of opposition incorporation into the PRI government. Still, even the official tallies show the percentage of votes for opposition candidates growing consistently.[5]

The lack of interest assimilation resulting in these lower voting percentages has forced the PRI to the verge of becoming only a dominant party, as opposed to a hegemonic one. Corresponding evidence shows the PRI's willingness to go to extreme lengths, involving unprecedented repression, in order to retain a dominant position. The 1988 presidential and 1991 and 1992 gubernatorial elections included massive electoral fraud in the face of unparalleled political opposition. In each of these elections, the government's willingness to use the military as a strong constabulary force has been demonstrated, ostensibly to keep social order, but also as a clearly-visible emissary of the PRI.

3. Military Subordination and Political Affiliation

The Mexican military was profoundly affected by "Cardenismo." Lieuwen depicts Cardenas as a true social revolutionary, and doubts that the transition from military to

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[5] Several sources document the declining percentages of PRI votes in Mexico's recent elections and the corresponding rise in political opposition support. See Alberto Aziz Nassif, "Regional Dimensions of Democratization" in Cornelius, Gentleman, and Smith, especially Figure 1, p. 89. Also see Tonatiuh Guillen Lopez in the same volume, Table 1, p. 248 and Table 4, p. 259 and Cornelius and Craig, Table 1, p. 65 and Table 2, p. 67.

civilian presidents could have been accomplished without his influence. This has prompted Huntington to agree that, "(i)n terms of policy the regime of Cardenas was the second Mexican Revolution."[4]

The imprint made by Cardenas on the modern military structure remains. While many of the changes were not popular with military leaders at the time, the generals remained loyal to their president in return for relative autonomy in operations and training. They also received virtually carte blanche, direct access to the president, yet were able to retain sufficient distance from political involvement to preserve a reputation as unsullied and above the political fray.

> The post-revolutionary professional officers in charge of the defense establishment showed no inclination to mingle in politics ever again. To do so would be to commit career suicide, politically as well as militarily.[5]

This was a major step in the professionalization of the Mexican armed forces, which has given the modern military leadership both a position within and access to the Mexican political hierarchy.

Lieuwen in Ronfeldt (1984.)

[4] Huntington (1968.) p. 321.

[5] Lieuwen in Ronfeldt (1984.) p. 61.

Today, Mexican officers of all services are expected not only to pursue advanced education, but are also assumed to support and uphold the ideals of the Revolution. As such, individual membership in the PRI is virtually assured. Little is known of the pressures within the military system to join the government party, although the late Robert Wesson contended that "the typical Mexican military officer considers himself removed from political circles and a political career."[6] While this may be true, Jose Luis Pineyro is also credible in observing,

> (i)t is rumored that officers who request permission to join a party other than the PRI are given an indefinite leave of absence, which virtually amounts to being discharged from the service. Rumor also has it that rebellious officers are denied credit for housing and other benefits.[7]

B. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MILITARY STRUCTURE

Mexico's Military Service Act of 1942, still in effect, requires that all male citizens over the age of 18 receive military training under the auspices of the National Service Brigades. While this organization provides only nominal training to its members, the number of reserve forces available for call-up greatly outnumbers the active duty

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[6] Robert Wesson. The Latin American Military Institution. (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1986.) p. 161.

[7] Pineyro in Varas. p. 126.

military contingent of 154,000.[8] As of 1984, 75% of active duty forces were Army, 19% were Navy, and the remaining 6% were Air Force.

The secretary of defense, responsible for the Army and Air Force, and the secretary of the navy occupy cabinet positions and are "personally selected by the President."[9] All promotions to the ranks of general or admiral must also be approved by the president.

> The same applies to the appointment and removal of military zone commanders... the chairman and vice chairman of the general staff, and the inspector general. The president must also give his consent before any military plans may be implemented.

"Personalismo" thus continues to play a large part in high-level military positions, much as "camarillas"[10] do within

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[8] World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1990. Table 1, p. 73, shows the rapid increase in active duty military forces between 1979 and 1989 as Mexico's modernization program was implemented. Despite the 1982 economic crisis, military strength was maintained and only showed one year of decrease (1984). Figures for reserve force strength are placed at 1.5 million in 1985. See English, p. 298.

[9] Maj. Stephen J. Wager. "Basic Characteristics of the Modern Mexican Military." In Ronfeldt (1984.) p. 89.

[10] Wager in Ronfeldt (1984.) p. 90.

[11] Pineyro in Varas. p. 123.

[12] Camarillas are defined by Cornelius and Craig as political cliques. Membership in an eminent politician's camarilla is essential to a successful political career in Mexico. See Cornelius and Craig, pp. 39-44, for their analysis of "Camarillas and

the civilian government structure.

A notable trend in the development of the depoliticized, modern military is the decline in the number of officers serving as state governors from half (15 of 31 during the Aleman sexenio, 1946-52) to only one or two since 1970.[73] The PRI government has actively discouraged political involvement by transferring its officers regularly, thus avoiding strong personal attachments to a particular region, and by prohibiting political involvement as a military member. By law, government participation must be undertaken as a private citizen. The Mexican Constitution stipulates the president as commander-in-chief of the armed forces. It subjugates the military to civil law, which is also headed by the president in his role as head of the state legal system.

1. The Role of Education

Virtually all Mexican military officers are graduates of the three service academies. The influence of this education and four-year exercise in building camaraderie and esprit de corps among classmates must not be underestimated.[74] Opportunities for professional development, further training, and graduate education are available, and are endorsed by both

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Clientelism." Also see Wesson, p. 52, for further analysis of how the military system "parallels" civilian political camarillas.

[73] Cornelius and Craig in Almond and Powell. p. 467.

[74] See Camp in Ronfeldt (1984.) pp. 118-122 are especially applicable.

civilian and military leadership.

The *Colegio Militar* graduates and commissions 100-350 Army officers each year. The cadets earn degrees in engineering and the physical sciences as well as political science. Senior officers attend the *Escuela Superior de Guerra* to continue their education and prepare themselves for staff duty.

While the Navy has played a relatively small part in Mexican history, it retains its own service academy in Veracruz and is represented at the federal level by the Ministry of Marine,[75] established in 1939.

The *Colegio del Aire* prepares Air Force officers for their future. The Mexican Air Force separated from the Army in 1944, while the Navy retains its own aviation corps. Mexico was the first Latin American nation to recognize the importance of air power, and developed an indigenous capability in the first years of human flight. By 1920 the *Arma Aerea de las Fuerzas Constitucionales* had produced 50 aircraft, far ahead of Mexico's southern neighbors.

Education and training have played an important role in the professionalization of Mexico's armed forces. Without formal education the military could soon lose its appeal to bright and ambitious young men as a means of social mobility and professional experience. The training environment also

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[75] Equivalent to the U.S. Secretary of the Navy.

serves to build a competitive and elite team spirit which has perpetuated the military's position within, but morally above, the political system.

As in other Latin American nations, the Mexican military has generally been viewed as a means of advancement by upper-lower and lower-middle class men. The armed forces offer education and social advancement opportunities, especially for officers, which might not otherwise have been available within Mexico's traditionally centralized economy and social structure.

C. THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES IN MEXICAN SOCIETY

Mexican social structure is in many ways more hierarchical than that of the United States, and tends to be more respectful of authority. This may be due in part to the centralized political power structure and strong social influence of the Roman Catholic Church. While the military has weathered times of sagging reputation, as it did following the 1968 Tlatelolco incident[7] and during recent investigations of

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[7] The 1968 Tlatelolco incident proved to be a watershed for the Mexican Army. Soldiers called in to break up student rioting in Mexico City opened fire, killing "scores (perhaps hundreds) of unarmed student demonstrators..." [George Philips. "Diaz Ordaz and the Student Massacre at Tlatelolco." The Presidency in Mexican Politics. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.) p. 19.] The massacre left a deep scar on the collective psyche of the military, and has effectively dampened for nearly 25 years the level of repression the military is willing to use in maintaining social order. Following Tlatelolco, the military could have chosen to respond with either continued repressive force or its current repulsion to another such event. The fact that Mexico's army has

possible drug trade involvement and other corruption, in the long-term these incidents have been attributed to the misuse of power by a few misguided individuals, and not an evil inherent in the institution itself. The military remains largely a respected profession in Mexico, much as it is in the United States.

Despite the perceived manipulation of the military in the 1988 elections by the PRI for political ends, the armed forces continue to offer excellent opportunities in a well-respected career field to Mexico's young men. In the late 1970s, the military embarked on a modernization plan designed to enhance its reputation at home and abroad. At the same time, the profits of a booming Mexican oil industry were poured into training and increasing levels of active duty manpower. Under this program, the number of active duty men has more than tripled[--] in 25 years. A "comprehensive programme of re-equipment"[--] and expansion was announced to herald the

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chosen a decreased role in politically motivated crowd control situations is significant. It stems at least in part from the continued level of identification that Mexican military men maintain with their civilian heritage. Since 1968, Mexico's armed forces have been reluctant to forcefully engage civilian resistance to the government, and are likely to remain so despite the increasing potential for government pressure in the coming years. See Roderic A. Camp. Entrepreneurs and Politics in Twentieth Century Mexico. (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.) pp. 24-25, and Meyer and Sherman, pp. 668-671.

[--] 1965 figures of 50,000 are from Lieuwen in Ronfeldt (1984.) p. 61.

[--] English. p. 310.

modernization of the 1980s.[79] This program was subsequently shelved by the economic crisis of 1982, leaving Mexico's soldiers, sailors, and airmen still equipped with largely pre-1955 vintage equipment.

In November of 1989 the modernization campaign was formally re-engaged when National Defense Secretary General Antonio Riviello Bazan made an announcement committing the military leadership to matching the modernizing pace of Mexican society within the military.[80] He also agreed with President Salinas's plans for modernization of the military, saying "(t)o renounce modernization is to condemn Mexico to poverty, ignorance, and instability."[81] The Navy Secretary was also interviewed, and stated that,

> the Navy is being modernized and renewed just like the (Army and Air Force).. "to consolidate the fulfillment of our constitutional duties, guarantee the nation's security, and protect the national sovereignty."[82]

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[79] See footnote 68. Also see Wesson, p. 161, for figures related to the Mexican military's growth objectives.

[80] "Defense Secretary Backs Military 'Modernization.'" XHTV Television, Mexico City, 4 November 1989, as reported by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service in FBIS-LAT-89-220, 16 November 1989. p. 6.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Quoting Mexican Naval Secretary Admiral Luis Carlos Ruano Angulo in a press conference given 15 June 1991, as reported in "Navy Chief on Modernization, Antidrug Operations." XHTV Television, Mexico City, 15 June 1991, in FBIS-LAT-91-120, 21 June 1991. p. 2.

The government's support for the modernization of its armed services serves both to at least partially satisfy any perceptions of neglect or non-support on the part of the military, and to keep military officers occupied with the more traditional trappings of a military career. Pineyro deals with this issue, saying that while modernization has allowed the Mexican military to develop esprit de corps and to professionalize, it has not yet reached that dangerous and dividing line beyond which soldiers and sailors see themselves as removed from and superior to civil society. Mexico's military modernization thus has helped the nation in maintaining autonomy from foreign powers as well as keeping the armed forces focused on a military role.[33]

1. The Domestic Role

Since 1940, Mexico's military resources have increasingly been directed against specific internal threats to national security as defined by the civilian government. This internal focus is reflected in the defensive posture of the armed forces. The nation's Revolution deepened the resolve of its leaders to maintain Mexico's commitment to international self-determinism and non-intervention. The military's response plans for addressing its major and most volatile missions are covered by the three *Planes de Defense Nacional*, or National Defense Plans. These task the armed

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[33] Pineyro in Varas. pp. 127-128.

forces to cover contingencies related to threats of foreign invasion, guerrilla insurgency, and natural disaster." Goodman and Johanna Mendelson maintain that the guerrilla threat of the 1960s and 1970s helped the military in its shift to "a preoccupation with subversion and internal security."[84]

Several ancillary domestic threats also endanger a continued professional role, while constituting the majority of tasking for the modern Mexican military. Four of these threats will be briefly discussed here. The loss of PRI hegemony as a primary threat is not disputed - indeed, none of the following dangers to continued civil rule is likely to cause a military repoliticization in and of itself. In conjunction with others, however, or by means of a "flash point" concurrent with the election of a non-PRI president, these factors could strongly influence Mexico's military to assume an increased political role. These four issues have been carefully chosen for their wide representation of the current and impending dangers to a subordinated and professionalized Mexican military, and not because they form an exhaustive list.

First is the counternarcotics effort, which requires

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[84] Ibid, p. 124. Additional information on the missions of the Mexican military can be found on pp.118-124.

[85] Goodman and Mendelson. "The Threat of New Missions: Latin American Militaries and the Drug War." In Goodman, Mendelson, and Rial. p. 190.

huge expenditures of military manpower. Eradication of growers and interdiction of traffickers is considered a major objective of the Mexican armed forces, and is currently tasked as the permanent mission of over 15,000 soldiers. The danger lies not only within the narcotics issue, but also "threatens traditional concepts of military professionalism"[56] by involving military personnel in domestic, covert, and corruption-laden activities. While the counternarcotics issue has not yet assumed the "national political stature"[57] in Mexico that it has in the United States, all of the armed services are currently actively involved in interdiction and eradication, and no diminishing of that role is predicted. The counternarcotics issue has the potential, if not strictly controlled, to corrupt both military soldiers and their high-ranking leaders. This could sever institutional loyalties and divide portions of the armed forces against each other, a dangerous and threatening turn of events for the continuance

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[56] Ibid. p. 191.

[57] Guadalupe Gonzalez. "The Drug Connection in U.S.-Mexican Relations." The Drug Connection in U.S.-Mexican Relations. Guadalupe Gonzalez and Marta Tienda (eds). (San Diego: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, Univ. of Ca, 1989.) p. 5. this monograph is part of a series edited by Rosario Green and Peter H. Smith, which addresses five topics of concern to future bilateral relations. The Drug Connection provides an excellent assessment of the different approaches toward and reasons behind each nation's counternarcotics policy.

of civil rule.

A second auxiliary threat involves the immigration of the Guatemalan refugees and insurgents who cross Mexico's southern border, and the emigration of large numbers of able-bodied workers to the United States in search of employment. The former present an internal insurgency threat and employ much of the army's manpower. The latter drain Mexico's labor force and economy. The country has long acted as a mecca to the displaced of Central America, much as the United States has issued its siren's call to malcontented Mexicans. For its own national security reasons, Mexico continues to be concerned by the seemingly endless influx of Guatemalans fleeing north across its border. Many are suspected of carrying with them the seeds of communist revolution. The Mexican Army has been tasked with closing the porous southern border, and takes its anti-communist, anti-insurgent mission most seriously.

To the north, Mexico is plagued with a labor drain to the United States. Whole communities suffer "migrant syndrome," in which the work force of entire townships is significantly depleted. Mexico's armed forces are also

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[88] For further information on Mexico's counternarcotics threat and the involvement of its armed forces, see Andrew Reding and Christopher Whalen. Fragile Stability: Reform and Repression in Mexico under Carlos Salinas, 1989-1991. (New York: Mexico Project, World Policy Institute, 1991.) Also see Thomas A. Murphy's thesis "Prospects for United States-Mexican Cooperation in the War on Drug Trafficking." (Monterey, Ca: Naval Postgraduate School, 1990.)

concerned over the militarization of the 2000 mile common border during the 1980s, when the U.S. tripled the number of agents and significantly increased the regional military presence.

Urban overpopulation, with its threat of social unrest and disease outbreaks of epidemic proportion poses a third potential catalyst for a revitalized military presence in Mexico and revised political role.[1] Likewise, excessive

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[1] For more extensive study of Mexico's border troubles and the threat they pose to continued stability, see Cunningham in Ronfeldt (1984.) Also see Jorge Durand and Douglas S. Massey. "Mexican Migration to the United States: A Critical Review." In LARR, Volume 27, Number 2, 1991, and Lorenzo Moreno, "The Linkage Between Population and Economic Growth in Mexico: A New Policy Proposal?" LARR, Volume 26, Number 3, 1991. The author also highly recommends Wayne A. Cornelius, "Mexican Migration to the United States." Mexican Migration to the United States: Origins, Consequences, and Policy Options. Wayne A. Cornelius and Jorge A. Bustamante (eds). (San Diego: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, Univ. of Ca, 1989.) This monograph covers the U.S. labor demand, Mexican labor supply, the "social and economic consequences of transborder labor migration," (p. 10) and provides an analysis of policy options for both the United States and Mexico. In the same volume, Kitty Calavita provides an insightful assessment of the 1980s move toward a U.S. militarization of the border. See her essay, "The Immigration Policy Debate: Critical Analysis and Future Options." Bustamante's essay, "Undocumented Immigration: Research Findings and Policy Options" in Roett (1988) also gives a clear and focused assessment of the national security implications of this issue.

The United Nations estimates the year 2000 population of Mexico City at 27.87 million people. Reported in Hoffman, p. 771. Currently, 14 million Mexico City residents are estimated to be without clean water or adequate sewage, making the "ring of misery" as the slums are called, a breeding ground for disease. For further information on Mexico's urban overpopulation problem, see Moreno in LARR, and Foley in LARR. Foley describes at length the policies of the Salinas administration and the President's plan for dealing with the campesinos. It is these unlanded who are displaced from their rural homes and seek a better life in the cities, at the rate of over one million per year for Mexico City alone.

military involvement or perceived government mis-handling of an environmental crisis could both increase Mexico's military presence and substantially change its role.

These issues are representative of the major, modern, internal threats to Mexico's national security. It is clear that since the subordination of Mexico's military to the civilian government some 50 years ago, the domestic role of the armed forces has increased. The fact that the military's mission has been virtually contained within its own borders, yet no threat to civil rule has re-emerged, is a tribute to the professionalism of Mexico's military leadership and its continuing commitment to the goals of the Revolution.

a. The Military and the Tecnicos

In the past 20 years, the Mexican military leadership has been forced to deal with a new breed of commander-in-chief. Carlos Salinas is the fourth consecutive president who has not previously held elective office."[1] He follows Luis Echeverria, Jose Lopez Portillo, and Miguel de la Madrid in a string of government administrators with advanced technical skills and training. The *tecnicos*, with their "more narrow focus,"[2] have thus far been privileged to bypass much

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[1] Cornelius and Craig in Almond and Powell. p. 450.

[2] Elizabeth G. Ferris. "Toward a Theory for the Comparative Analysis of Latin American Foreign Policy." Latin American Foreign Policy: Global and Regional Dimensions. Elizabeth G. Ferris and Jennie K. Lincoln (eds). (Boulder: Westview Press, 1981.) p. 252.

of the taint of corruption and fraud which permeates the traditional political structure. They have been stereotyped as lacking the basic political skills required to run Mexico's federal government, and advancing primarily on the merit of foreign-earned graduate degrees. Years of government service, however, mean that these men have not been political novices when elected. Rather, their previous service has typically been spent in non-elected federal positions, often in "financial and planning agencies,"[14] making them well-prepared to deal with the economic issues so prevalent in Mexico today.

While there are definite advantages to being a political "outsider" as president, there are commensurate concerns, especially within the military:

> (N)ever tolerant of instability or lack of discipline, (the armed forces) must be convinced by the tecnicos that "things won't get out of hand." One way to do this is to keep the services modernized and properly educated in order to respond to any threat.[15]

The tecnico president faces greater challenges than a politico in maintaining the pride and autonomy of Mexico's military. He is an unknown entity and without experience in

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[13] See Cornelius and Craig, both in Almond and Powell, p. 450, and in The Mexican Political System in Transition, p. 48, for further discussion of these stereotypes against the *tecnicos*.

[14] Cornelius and Craig. p. 48.

[15] Kelley. p. 56.

dealing with military forces. He must guard against being perceived as unknowledgeable or undevoted to shielding the armed forces from engagement in politics, and must maintain his authority in the established command structure, especially his position as commander-in-chief.

> Since future Mexican presidents are likely to be recruited from the ranks of the technocrats, there is little prospect of a return to government by traditional politicos."

The tecnicos will apparently continue as a fixture in future Mexican administrations. The military acceptance and support of each presidential aspirant will ultimately rest on the reputation he enjoys within the armed forces and the respect he demands from its leadership.

2. The International Role

The modern Mexican military has no history of an external mission. As a home-based and internally-focused force, the impressive level of professionalism attained in the years since the Revolution seems to be singularly out of step with the path chosen by a majority of Latin American militaries. The Mexican forces have been content to retain a traditional military focus, applying their men and arms to internal objectives when tasked, but not seeking a role for

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" Cornelius and Craig in Almond and Powell. p. 451.

themselves in the political structure.

The strong and continuing commitment of the Mexican government and its military to the goals of its Revolution includes a moral imperative to denounce foreign interventionism as a political tool. As was mentioned previously, Mexico has strongly supported ideological plurality in foreign governments when those governments have been deemed legitimate by their peoples. Mexico is firmly convinced of both the immorality of past U.S. encroachments on its sovereign affairs, and of U.S. interventions in Central American and Caribbean nations. This explains the lack of Mexican armed involvement in the region, and is a confirmation of the enduring strength of Mexican Revolutionary ideology.

This chapter has also discussed the more active role of the Mexican military in areas which are traditionally non-military in nature. Goodman and Mendelson see this shift in mission as leading to a "new professionalism,"[17] which stresses internal as opposed to external security issues. They argue that the rising importance of fighting domestic narcotics trafficking and guerrilla movements has led to "a

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[17] While this section of the essay is purposefully kept short, the subject is an interesting one. For additional information please see the author's essay as previously noted.

[18] Goodman and Mendelson in Goodman, Mendelson, and Rial. p. 190.

preoccupation with subversion and internal security"[19] throughout Central and South America since the 1960s.

Still, the Mexican armed forces have survived for 70 years without an external role. Their government's politics have precluded military involvement in the conflicts of the region, yet have maintained an active and professional capability, unlike the Costa Rican example. (In Costa Rica a national police force has been substituted for traditional military forces with considerable domestic success.) The importance of the military professionalization so carefully engendered and maintained by the Mexican civilian establishment must not be sold short. Professionalism has been the major component in retaining the specialist nature of Mexico's domestically-oriented military, without allowing it to degenerate into a militarized police force.

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[19] Ibid.

IV. THE CURRENT PERSPECTIVE

Historically, political opposition parties have "essentially performed a stabilizing function"[100] in Mexico. They have served as an outlet for the disenchanted electorate, and since 1976, allowed token representation at the local, state, and even national levels. The most probable threat to continued civilian rule in Mexico is a continued, gradual subsumption of PRI power by growing opposition parties. The question remains: how will the military react to this loss of hegemony? The Mexican armed forces are extremely loyal to the government party, and their true level of subordination will be tested if a non-PRI president is elected.

The PRI did not intend to create the instrument of its own demise through the necessity of incorporating increasing proportional representation into government. Alternate parties were supported "to give the PRI something to run against, thereby strengthening the government's claim to popular support and legitimate authority."[101] This process proved impossible to control. The PRI is "now confronted by myriad

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[100] Cornelius and Craig (1991.) p. 73.

[101] Ibid.

challenges to its political hegemony and legitimacy," created by its own efforts at co-opting political power and maintaining its own legitimacy. Options for future PRI-PAN and PAN-PRD coalitions are discussed by Miguel Angel Centeno. The latter alliance, especially, is increasingly likely as pacts are made to ensure replacement of PRI incumbents with opposition candidates.[103]

Military relations with the PRI remain much as they have for over 60 years,[104] and will continue as long as the PRI provides for the needs of the military without involving it unduly in political matters. The PRI has thus kept the military reputation untarnished and paid its soldiers, sailors, and airmen relatively well. Loyalties run deep on both sides, and an intense allegiance to the PRI presidency is

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[102] Miguel Angel Centeno. Mexico in the 1990s: Government and Opposition Speak Out. (San Diego: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, Univ. of Ca, 1991.) p. 1.

[103] See Centeno's introduction. Also Carlos B. Gil (ed). Hope and Frustration: Interviews with Leaders of Mexico's Political Opposition. (Scholarly Resources, Wilmington, De; 1992.) pp. 71-76. Also see _____. "Mexicans Hope to Dislodge Ruling Party." The Californian. 6 November 1992. p. 10A, and "Fears of Fraud, Violence Shroud Election in Mexico." The Californian. 9 November 1992. p. 5A. This article discusses the Fall 1992 coalition between the PAN and PRD, which "joined forces to back businessman Jorge Cardenas" for the governorship of Tamaulipas. Although the coalition candidate was purportedly credited with having won 70 percent of the popular vote, the PRI candidate was declared the official winner of the gubernatorial election.

[104] Meyer in Reyna and Wienert. p. 10. Meyer cites Reyna's essay on political control in modern Mexico entitled *"Control Politico, Estabilidad y Desarrollo en Mexico."* Cuadernos del C.E.S. *Numero* 3, 1974.

ingrained in military leaders. "The military tends to see itself as morally superior to the country's civilian leaders"[105] especially the tecnicos, and will continue to carry out its mission of protecting and defending the government in the person of the president. For example, it is not unusual for a defense secretary or other high-ranking military leader to "reiterate the loyalty of the Army, Air Force, and Navy to (the) President"[106] as commander-in-chief, rather than to the Constitution or to the Republic.

The importance of this distinction between fealty to the Presidency and to the party requires that careful consideration be given to the possibility that if the PRI presidency were to be replaced by an opposition president-elect, the Mexican military could conceivably transfer its institutional loyalties from the Constitution and the government as an institution to the persona of the PRI presidential candidate and the PRI party leadership. Likewise, the leadership of the armed forces could transfer their loyalties to the new opposition president. Much of how the military reacts to this loss of PRI hegemony will be shaped by the PRI response to its declining power. Four of the options available to the PRI and the projected military reactions will be discussed in Chapter V.

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[105] Cornelius and Craig in Almond and Powell. p. 467.

[106] FBIS-LAT-89-220. p. 6.

Fears exist among proponents of a multi-party democracy that before this point can be reached, the military will unilaterally decide to expand its role in elections to preclude opposition parties from gaining significant levels of public support, and potentially exert substantial influence on the results. It is also possible such an increased military role could be tasked by the PRI in an effort to maintain political dominance. To quell public concerns about the military defense of PRI hegemony prior to the 1991 gubernatorial elections, Mexican Defense Minister Antonio Riviello Bazan announced that the Army and Air Force would not intervene in the elections, that the presence of soldiers was only a precautionary measure to preserve order during the polling and to collect ballots.[47]

Despite growing voter support and increasing representation at the local, state, and even national levels, a non-PRI president will present a virtually unknown entity, both personally and corporately. The level of military support received will largely depend on the personality and politics of the opposition president, as well as the willingness of the PRI incumbent to transfer power out of PRI hands. The president-elect's sphere of influence will be significantly

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[47] As announced by Mexican Defense Secretary General Antonio Riviello Bazan and reported in *"Ejercito y Fuerza Aerea, solo Para cuidar el Orden Durante los Comicios."* Excelsior. 7 July 1991, p. 1A. Carried by the U.S. Government's Info South Database.

narrowed if not approved by the military.

When future public opinion strongly supports a non-PRI (either PAN or leftist coalition) candidate for President of Mexico, the armed forces and civil society may become polarized: The military could continue to rely on the institutionalized PRI presidency and Senate for its support. Central to the issue of military support will be the question as to which party's candidate succeeds the PRI presidential incumbent. The armed forces in Mexico, as in most countries, are a largely conservative institution, and are far more likely to accept a PAN president than a leftist one. The military leadership will not easily accept the virtually inevitable transition of power to any other political party, however, despite the political affiliation of the candidate. This scenario, which will almost surely occur within the next 20 years, may well serve to pit the military against civil society if the electorate backs a PRD (or like coalition) candidate perceived as unresponsive to the needs and desires of the military. This could leading to increased military repression and deprofessionalization through direct military interference in civil politics.

While the Mexican presidency has been largely depersonalized in favor of the larger party institution, PRI power remains centralized in the office of the presidency, and support within the military for that office remains

unilaterally tied to the PRI. The strength of the presidential office, however, is clearly diminishing. Smith warns, "'(i)t seems unlikely... that the office can regain its traditional omnipotence and quasi-magical aura."[108] Thus the PRI presidency is creating its own slippery slope, which may eventually result in the loss of the presidency. The 1988 and 1991 elections saw unprecedented levels of electoral fraud precipitated by the government and often enforced by armed servicemen. While military forces were positioned at the polls ostensibly to maintain order, their presence may have been felt as a physical threat in some politically contentious areas. It is unknown how long this trend of utilizing the military to enforce PRI will can continue without widespread public rebellion, just as is unknown how far the military will go to maintain PRI hegemony in the Presidential Palace.

Zinser has written, "The nature of civil-military relations... hinges on the military's remaining trustful of and loyal to the civil authorities it recognizes..."[109] The key here lies in recognition: if the armed forces are willing to further increase repression and electoral fraud, either at the incumbent president's behest or on their own initiative, they will continue to separate themselves from service to the state and the public in favor of service to the party. If, however,

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[108] Smith in Cornelius, Gentleman, and Smith. p. 413.

[109] Zinser in Goodman, Mendelson, and Rial. p. 229.

the military leadership feels threatened, its perceptions of a decreased social position or political status could lead the military to attempt a usurpation of that power.

A. THE POTENTIAL FOR INTERVENTION

The loyalty and subordination of the Mexican military to its civil government is well-documented. What has not been explored are the factors which could cause this relationship to decay. The very professionalization Mexico's military leadership has so strongly pursued over the past 50 years could be the vehicle of a newly politicized role. Pineyro notes that

> (m)ilitary education and productive capacity are increasing the military's potential for autonomy: the training of military professionals, such as doctors, dentists, engineers, managers, and so forth, plus their capacity to supply basic goods, such as food, suggest that the armed forces may one day be able to function without input from civil society.[110]

Increased military autonomy can thus be viewed as a factor of professionalism in this case. Pineyro's concern is that military autonomy from civil society could cause the armed forces to deny civil control. If Mexico's armed services were to usurp political power, Pineyro says that they have the tools and skills, largely because of the advanced education

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[110] Pineyro in Varas. p. 124.

and other vehicles of professionalization, to take on such tasks and to withdraw from civil society and control. The relationship between Mexico's military and civilian government elites is, however, no more static than any other relationship. Thus the factors which affect the current stability are in constant motion, and the balance between political subordination and remilitarization is continually changing.

While the modern Mexican armed forces currently pose little more of a threat to the Salinas administration than the military of the United States poses domestically, lesser circumstances would be required to move the Mexican forces to regain an active political role, and perhaps even to take the Presidency by force. As Kelley noted, "Any instability or lack of competence shown by the ruling elite could be met with military intervention."[41] While the likelihood of this appears minimal today, the loss of PRI hegemony could conceivably bring the services to a "flash point." The military would repoliticize if its leaders felt that national stability or its own political position was seriously threatened.

The history of the post-Revolutionary government in Mexico has been one of flexibility and co-optation. Having survived for over 60 years as the true incarnation of the Revolution, the PRI corporate ideology and, to some extent, mythology,

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[41] Kelley. p. 57.

will be hard-pressed for acceptance in a non-PRI president. Sanderson refers to the strength of the PRI as residing in its "political unpredictability and amazing party resiliency in the face of crisis."[112] The needs of the military may not continue to be met by a weakening PRI government, however, even with such stores of resiliency and institutional loyalty as the PRI has engendered in the armed forces.

The potential for a military repoliticization and its likely impact on the professionalization of the Mexican armed forces will be examined in the next section of this thesis through the framework provided by Davies' J-Curve and his theory of relative deprivation.

B. THE J-CURVE AND RELATIVE DEPRIVATION

Increasingly unfulfilled expectations beget revolution. This is the basic premise behind James Davies' model,[113] and one which lends itself to interpretation and application to the PRI-military relationship in Mexico. A modernized, educated military leadership suddenly perceiving itself as abandoned by its political patron and position through the election of a non-PRI president could view itself as being in this predicament. The PRI has worked to empower its military

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[112] Steven Sanderson. "Presidential Succession and Political Rationality in Mexico." World Politics, Volume XXXV. (Princeton Univ. Press, Lawrenceville, N.J; 1983.) p. 318.

[113] James C. Davies. "Toward a Theory of Revolution." (American Sociological Review, Volume 6, Number 1, February 1962.)

forces, but could find such efforts backfiring as the military perceives itself as deprived of its legitimate needs.

Davies maintains that a simultaneous and relatively equal rise in levels of expectation and satisfaction maintain social stability. When that relative level of gratification can no longer be maintained by the institution, the individual or group feels disillusioned and deprived. Applying this model, it is the PRI government which is responsible for ensuring acceptable levels of satisfaction are maintained for Mexico's military. The military's levels of satisfaction then must fall behind the still increasing level of expectations, and the group become dissatisfied with its lot, before revolution is born. With current levels of gratification, the military is content and continues to support the government. The gap between levels of expectation and their realization may, however, widen precipitously, triggered by the loss of PRI hegemony. The armed forces might then withdraw their support and turn against the PRI government or its imminent successor.

According to Davies, the source of this relative deprivation can either originate at basic levels (food, clothing, shelter) or at higher ones, involving such factors as wage increases and job benefits. The level at which the deprivation takes place is inconsequential, as it is the increasing rift between expectations and attainment which causes the feelings of deprivation. Victims "fear not just

that things will no longer continue to get better, but - even more crucially - that ground will be lost that they have already gained."[114]

Within the Mexican military, perceptions of relative deprivation could potentially arise as domestic threats consume the energies and resources the military considers its own. These may become a primary threat as the PRI loses its preeminent political position, and leaders of the armed forces must seek out their new role in a changing government. The move to increase military involvement in domestic issues could also pose a serious threat to a professionalized military, as was postulated by Zinser.[115]

In addition, while not a factor for political mobilization in and of itself, the state of the Mexican economy could be a decisive element in this analysis. The importance of Mexico's economy to the country's political stability is growing as the country modernizes and industrializes, and the link between economy and polity will continue to strengthen. Another recession such as the country experienced in the 1980s could well push Mexico's PRI government over the brink of political as well as economic bankruptcy. While the United States would use all possible means to preclude such a recurrence, another

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[114] Ibid.

[115] Zinser in Goodman, Mendelson and Rial, especially pp. 229-232.

worldwide economic depression such as was experienced in 1929 could effectively prevent the United States from activating its resources against such a remilitarization. An economic collapse alone would not drive Mexico's armed services to resume their former political role. A severe economic decline, however, especially when figured jointly with the loss of PRI hegemony and one or more of the four ancillary factors mentioned previously, could evoke sufficient feelings of deprivation among the ranks of Mexico's military leadership to foment a repoliticization.

According to Davies' model, increased incidents of military aggression and repression would occur as precursors of military repoliticization in response to rising frustrations within the armed forces. This assumes the move to repoliticize is internal to the military itself. In modern Mexico, however, such a move would probably not originate within the military, but would be precipitated

> as associates of civilian sectors that are strong and persuasive enough to convince certain members of the military of the adequacy and timeliness of their assumption of government functions.[...]

[...] Ibid. pp. 219-220. Zinser notes that Ronfeldt agrees with his assessment of the increased potential for Mexican military repoliticization if it originates outside of the military, in the civilian elite sector. This position is also taken by Cunningham in Ronfeldt (1984.) p. 172.

This adds a factor to the equation proposed by Davies by including the potential for a "third party. Thus the theoretical door is opened for a group such as disillusioned and exasperated PRI elites to act as the catalyst for military repoliticization in an effort to maintain failing PRI hegemony. While deprofessionalizing its role in society and, in the long run, demeaning the role it has worked for so long to protect and defend, this scenario of a military empowerment in Mexico at the suggestion of civilian elites is more plausible than is a strict interpretation of Davies' theory. Still, his direct application of relative deprivation to military deprofessionalization and repoliticization provides a useful framework for examining the potential range of military responses to a loss of PRI hegemony, which is the subject of the next chapter.

V. FOUR SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE OF PRI-MILITARY RELATIONS

The four-scenario model developed by Cornelius and Craig[117] provides an excellent approach for examining the future options for Mexico's civil-military relations. Although the authors' original focus was on the government's internal machinations rather than on the military's reaction to the "breakdown of the one-party hegemonic political system in Mexico,"[118] their four options can be readily applied to this assessment of continued military subordination. The scenarios range from political closure as the most likely alternative to bring about a military intervention, to immobilism, to the modernization of the current authoritarian government structure, and finally to limited power sharing at the far, low end of the military interventionist spectrum. The next portion of this thesis will apply these four scenarios to the military's political position as PRI power diminishes, analyze the circumstances which would bring each to bear, and assess their consequences.

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[117] Cornelius and Craig. pp. 115-121.

[118] Ibid. p. 115.

A. POLITICAL CLOSURE

The first and most likely scenario for a military repoliticization involves the political closure of Mexico. This scenario is presented second in the original continuum provided by Cornelius and Craig, after immobilism. When applied to the future political role of the armed forces, however, its factors clearly carry the highest potential for military repoliticization. In their definition of political closure, Cornelius and Craig focus on internal PRI pressures for political retrenchment and abandonment of democratic reforms. They suggest PRI elite pressures upon the president would threaten a dissolution of PRI support and cohesion for the presidency if reforms were pursued. Their model also hinges political closure on the failure of the economic model emplaced by President Salinas and his tecnico predecessors.

The first factor in this scenario, mounting international pressure, would seek to force the faltering PRI government into accepting a new role as one among many political parties, resulting in a PRI retrenchment. The original model indicates such political retrenchment would require an increase in authoritarianism and enforced social repression, resulting in international pressure to moderate the government's harsh stance. This could serve to severely set Mexico back in the economic realm, which would not be tolerated by the military. Political closure could thus also equal economic closure, a

scenario which could not augur well for the nation. Therefore this, like immobilism, is an unlikely alternative for the PRI government. Only the most reactionary party political leaders would prove willing to isolate their country in the face of modern economic expansion.

A second factor of political closure is the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement, which should virtually cut the option of political closure from the list of available policy options. When the accord is ratified makes little difference, as it will surely be an early priority of the Clinton Administration.[11] The increased international focus and potential economic gains which are likely to accompany execution of the accord, and the accompanying loss of sovereignty inherent in any international trade agreement should serve to keep both Mexico's civilian and military leadership from allowing such an impasse to be reached.

If, however, political closure is reached before the accord can be fully implemented, the possibility of economic collapse also enters the picture. The possibility of Mexico suffering any semblance of all-encompassing economic collapse grows weaker and less likely as the inevitable implementation of NAFTA becomes reality. Thus an actual enactment of events justifying military usurpation of government control also

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[11] _____. "Clinton tells Mexico's Salinas he Backs Trade Pact." The Californian. 6 November 1992. p. 7C.

become increasingly implausible.

Central to this scenario is the third factor of political closure, the severe deterioration of Mexico's economy stemming from the failure of economic policies enacted by the *tecnico* PRI administration. In response, the first step toward political closure would be the PRI president's abandonment of political reform. This would initially serve to rally some increased measure of support for the embattled president among a threatened elite. It would also, however, create an immediate backlash among all elements of the political opposition, necessitating the imposition of further authoritarian measures. In this scenario,

> (s)ince the PRI seems to have lost the capacity to incorporate such movements, there may be a strong temptation to simply repress (political opposition) rather than try to build strategic alliances with them.[120]

At the beginning of this phasing into political closure, the loyalty and support of the military would be crucial: without the backing of the armed forces, the president could prove unable to project a sufficiently powerful presence to maintain his position. Edward Williams and Freeman Wright note that "(d)uring economic bad times the military tends to assume power to save the nation from what it regards to be the

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[120] Cornelius and Craig. p. 118.

ineptitude of civilian leaders."[121] Therefore the president must continue to be viewed by the leadership of the armed forces as both capable and decisive if military support is not to come into question. With political and military elite backing, however, the president could rally public support, both to increase his own legitimacy and to portray an image of strength.

The fourth and final factor of political closure, economic collapse, becomes imminent as the PRI president is forced to resort to increasingly authoritarian means to retain his authority and position. Political elite backing fades as the increasingly besieged president relies on fewer advisors and less compromise. This remoteness of the head of the PRI from both the party and his constituency would distance the president from all but the closest followers.

As the president recedes from traditional PRI tactics, toward inflexibility, the PRI cabinet and Secretaries of the Army and Navy could be coerced into defending the president's position on the grounds of economic and political stability. In this scenario, the increasingly authoritarian measures would most likely be touted publicly as temporary and

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[121] Williams and Wright. p. 199. The authors list economic reasons as the primary "internal condition" facilitating repoliticization of Latin American militaries, above other social and political pressures. Although Williams and Wright are referring to Latin American militaries in general and not to Mexico's unique case, their theory is equally plausible when examining the potential catalysts of a Mexican repoliticization.

necessary, albeit unfortunate. The military's position, then, in the scenario of political closure is not necessarily one of action, but definitely one of at least verbal support for the president. It is unlikely, however, that even a strong and previously popular president would assume the continued backing of the military if he were to attempt to repeatedly utilize the armed forced to repress political dissent.

The potential for a repoliticization of Mexico's armed forces is most likely to occur in the scenario of political closure. While this is the least likely of the four scenarios to actually occur, it carries the highest potential for a military repoliticization. Political closure is comprised of four factors. First, A weakened and politically threatened PRI could begin to retrench as international pressure to implement democratic reforms mounts to intolerable levels. The second factor involves the tenets of the North American Free Trade Agreement and the PRI fear of potential economic and political losses. Third, the severe deterioration of Mexico's economy could force the PRI to look to its loyal right arm, the military, to maintain its seat in power. The military would probably not usurp the reins of power for its own ends in this scenario, even as the fourth factor, economic collapse, became imminent. It could, however, do so at the behest of disgruntled PRI elites fearing the impending loss of political hegemony. As the strong arm of the PRI, the armed forces would

thus merely ensure political positions were reserved for PRI representatives.

B. IMMOBILISM

Immobilism is the second scenario in this model. It was the first in the original model built by Cornelius and Craig. Immobilism represents a lesser threat of military repoliticization than does political closure, and is somewhat more likely to occur.

Cornelius and Craig define immobilism as the inability of Mexico's PRI elite to "adapt constructively to the country's new political environment."[122] They posit that stagnation may result as the PRI fails to respond with sufficient speed and strength to popular calls for democratic reforms. Webster provides the basis for this term, defining immobilism as

> (a) governmental policy characterized by compromise and moderation often to the point of ignoring basic issues and stagnation of progressive trends.[123]

This formal definition of immobilism is largely unknown, but is in keeping with the definition provided by Cornelius and Craig. Application of this term to their scenario for political transition is appropriate. Implying an eventual

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[122] Cornelius and Craig (1991.) p. 115.

[123] Webster's Third International Dictionary. (Springfield, Mass: Merriam-Webster Publishers, 1986.)

inability to move or function effectively, the term is also readily applied to examination of the relationship between military and PRI leadership as the party is overtaken by political opposition.

Several distinct factors of immobilism deserve individual consideration. In the first notable component of this scenario, military and civil leadership arrive at a political impasse as PRI hegemony falters, a juncture neither is capable of broaching successfully. PRI leadership would then prove increasingly unable to govern due to a lack of legitimacy and inability to adapt to the pluralistic political environment forced upon it. Thus Mexico's political elites would effectively freeze the wheels of their own government, rendering ineffectual any and all attempts by PRI officials to gain consensus or promote action.

Should this government freeze occur, the leadership of the armed forces may see itself as (1) capable of adapting where the civil government is not, (2) more in touch with the constituency, and (3) more capable of ruling effectively than the increasingly illegitimate PRI. Several key characteristics of Mexico's modern military might assist a remilitarization in this case: most importantly, the "increasing military sophistication"[124] resulting from wide-spread access to graduate-level education for large numbers of military

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[124] Cunningham in Ronfeldt (1984.) p. 172.

officers, which has resulted in an educated and politically astute ally for the PRI. Again, however, it is unlikely that the armed forces, or independent groups of officers, would attempt to usurp government power for their own ends. It is far more probable that senior officers could be persuaded by disillusioned PRI officials to seize the Federal District in the name of the PRI. This attempt would be made to return legitimacy to the one-party system and broach Mexico's political immobilism.

A second factor of immobilism is the inherent ultra-flexibility which could keep PRI party elites from coalescing on the issues of democratization, thus dooming their position in the pluralistic government of the future. Were the PRI leaders able to maintain some semblance of cohesion in this scenario, they might be able to lead the party in continuing to provide political representation for large sectors of Mexican society. Such interest consolidation is unlikely, however, and immobilism may effectively deny the party the benefit of democratic reform. After-the-fact attempts at political reform would have virtually no chance of success.

As the civilian PRI government becomes increasingly bound by pressures to compromise, the leadership of the armed forces may perceive the party as abandoning the objectives of the Revolution in favor of self-preservation. In response, the military is more likely to take upon itself the responsibility

for carrying on those ideals. This could take the form of increased military autonomy and a greater political role by senior military personnel.

A third factor of immobilism is that it could so paralyze the party by the time elites attempt reform, that even a strong political leader would be unable to revitalize and motivate party support. The diminishment of the president's role is inherent in this scenario, making the threat posed to the PRI government by political opposition less than the level achieved within the PRI itself. In such a situation the party elites would see no alternative but to look to new sources for leadership, perhaps attempting to utilize the military in enforcing their will.

The demise of the office of the PRI president as central leader of the country would throw the armed forces into a quandary. In the second factor of immobilism, the military may feel the ideals of the Revolution are being abandoned by the PRI government. In the third, it could be the military itself which feels abandoned by its patron, the president of Mexico. This could prove devastating to the services so painstakingly subordinated over a number of decades to the civil government. A loss of leadership in an authoritarian system such as Mexico's could cause the military as well as the civilian administration to search for new sources of leadership, despite the divisive results for both groups.

A fourth factor of immobilism is the inevitable split which would emerge from the actions of both the reactionaries within the party elite who wish to return to a PRI government at all costs, and the revolutionaries, both internal and external to the party, who wish to impose democratic reforms. This could cause party elites to split along *politico-tecnico* or conservative-liberal lines, but the resulting factionalism would almost certainly prove fatal to the PRI as a co-opting influence in Mexican society and hasten its political destruction. Cornelius and Craig postulate that in the case of immobilism, the PRI would either return to its corporatist heritage or

> the party will be irrevocably split, with the old-style corporatists and the modernizing technocrats going their own separate ways, taking whatever supporters they can muster.[125]

The result would be a virtual deadlock, with neither leftist nor rightist opposition parties able to break the stalemate. Indeed, the split in the PRI could serve to further divide and conquer the political opposition, rendering it less effective than before the PRI breakdown. As PRI leaders then settle into one of two camps, probably divided along reactionary *politico* or reform-minded *tecnico* lines, the corporatist legacy of the

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[125] Cornelius and Craig. p. 115.

PRI might well be shattered in favor of two (or more) polarized factions competing for popular support. Each sector of the failing PRI party would then be forced to muster its own popular support, but the transition from PRI hegemony to multi-party plurality would have to be completed without the former's stabilizing influence.

Caught in the middle of this split between conservatives and liberals, or politicos and tecnicos, the military might well be seen by all PRI factions as a prize to be won. While the generals and admirals of the military would not relish such a position, each contender for political power would realize the significance of military backing, both from a security perspective and from the possibility of utilizing any residual legitimacy surrounding the military to increase its own prominence and prestige.

The fifth and final factor of immobilism is "intra-elite conflict"[125] and the intra-party rivalries which would result in an ineffective "lame duck" PRI president, who can only wait for his successor's inauguration while watching his own party's demise. This final factor could firmly freeze the wheels of government and might provide a catalyst, effectively propelling the military to seize the reins of political power.

Cornelius and Craig maintain that "(e)ven though the PRI will continue to deteriorate, no opposition party will have

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[126] Ibid.

the capacity to replace it in power, at least at the national level."[127] This may not be altogether true. As was discussed previously, the PAN and PRD recently combined political forces in Tamaulipas by supporting a single gubernatorial candidate in an attempt to overthrow the PRI candidate.[128] Similar coalitions will probably be formed in other states as the PRI becomes increasingly vulnerable to electoral defeat. Assuming that for the 1990s, at least, Cornelius and Craig will continue to be correct in their assessment that opposition parties will be unable to defeat the PRI at the national level, the military will, for the present, remain the only institution capable of preempting PRI power and maintaining social order. The corporatist heritage of the Mexican armed forces makes its military leaders natural successors to political power in an immobilism scenario.

Immobilism would effectively stall the political efforts of both the PRI and opposition parties, ensuring little could be accomplished without a catalyst. This was postulated in the preceding chapter through Davies' theory of relative deprivation with the addition of Zinser's requirement for a catalyst. As unlikely as the entire scenario of immobilism

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[127] Ibid. p. 117.

[128] _____. "Mexicans Hope to Dislodge Ruling Party." The Californian. 6 November 1992. p. 10A. Also see _____. "Mexico Opposition Plans Protest of Election." The New York Times. 10 November 1992, p. A6.

seems, a military repoliticization would be the most effective catalyst to break immobilism's political deadlock.

As the effects of these five factors of immobilism begin to accumulate, the leadership of the armed forces could expect to find their PRI benefactor consumed with self-preservation and increasingly unconcerned with the welfare of its clients. The military would thus be increasingly willing to seize political power, at least temporarily. Let us summarize this scenario's distinct implications for military intervention. First, under immobilism the leadership of the armed forces is likely to see itself as more capable of ruling and more legitimate than the deadlocked PRI. Second, this same leadership would see the ideals of the Revolution abandoned in favor of self-perpetuation of the party supposedly committed to preserving the union of the Republic. Third, the military could view its role as abandoned by its long-time PRI patrons, as they battle each other in the political infighting consuming the Federal District. Fourth, factional squabbling for military support could further confuse a military dedicated to its own depoliticization. And lastly, a faltering an ineffectual lame-duck president might conceivably act as the final straw forcing a repoliticization of Mexico's armed forces at the behest of disillusioned civilian elites. Thus, it is not unrealistic to assume the military might, of its own volition, attempt to usurp political power from the gridlocked

PRI. Its intentions in so doing, however, would not lie in perpetuation of its own political power, but in an attempt to reestablish the power base of the inclusionary one-party government system, based on Revolutionary ideals.

The scenario of immobilism cannot be overlooked when reviewing the possibilities for Mexico's political forecast, but the actual probability of such an occurrence is and shall remain small. The political acuity of both Mexico's PRI and its military must be taken into account: it seems unlikely that such an impasse could be attained without drawing some preemptive response from the government, military, or political opposition.

C. MODERNIZATION OF AUTHORITARIANISM

In their model, Cornelius and Craig utilize this third scenario to depict a re-energized PRI, capable of fending off indefinitely any and all potential adversaries from either the political right or left. This is the most likely PRI response to an impending loss of hegemony, but bears a significantly decreased potential for a repoliticization of the armed forces. A renewed authoritarianism could be applied by the PRI in an attempt to maintain both political power and social stability. Depending largely on *Pronasol* and other co-opting programs aimed at increasing the base of PRI support, the party could thus sustain itself for an indeterminate period of time.

It is unreasonable, however, to think that the growing trend towards political plurality could be permanently stopped through such simple means. This would temporarily end the divisive electoral fraud which has increased with the strength of political opposition. It might even encourage greater autonomy within the confines of those parameters acceptable to the PRI. The amount of incorporation, flexibility, and compromise which would be required, however, make the long-term success of a modernized authoritarian system questionable. Still, this option provides little potential for a repoliticized military. The needs of the armed forces would continue to be provided by the governing PRI elite, and the military's power and social position remain assured.

The first factor of this scenario involves a reversion to populism in the face of increased political pluralism at the local and state levels. This would include an increase in *personalismo* and a rising reliance by the PRI on the charismatic leadership of the president. It would also give rise to a growing authoritarianism at the national level.

This scenario would not be difficult for the leadership of Mexico's armed forces to accept, as long as severe levels of repression were not required in order to engage this renewed authoritarianism. Assuming that the political powers behind the PRI implement this scenario as a pre-emptive rather than a reactionary measure, the political cost incurred by the

military would be minimal. The armed forces currently proclaim their allegiance to the president as well as to the Republic: the transition to an increased authoritarianism would therefore not require much political capital. The military would, however, be caught between patron and patriotism if the PRI hierarchy were to wait until a non-PRI president is elected, or appears about to be elected, before implementing the restrictions inherent in a modernized authoritarian system. It is, however, unlikely that the PRI would wait until such time as its hegemony has been lost (or that loss is imminent) before instituting a revitalized authoritarian model, centered around a highly personalistic presidency.

The second factor of modernized authoritarianism would be the continuance of limited democracy at the state and local levels, as far as this is condoned by the PRI national leadership. This would serve to incorporate potentially dangerous elements of the political opposition into the government system. It would also allow the PRI to control the level of that representation and the measure of its effectiveness at meeting the needs of non-PRI supporters for an indefinite period of time. With such a system, the PRI could repress the strength of the competition presented at the national level, but still permit a legal and potentially viable political rivalry with the PRI. It could do so at a level far lower than that proposed in the fourth scenario,

limited power sharing, but with far more efficacy than the options proposed in scenarios one or two. Modernized authoritarianism would also allow the PRI to retain its political adversaries in a weakened state.

In this scenario, the PRI would not be likely to maintain so strong a position as in either political closure or immobilism, but would maintain sufficient political power only to preserve a divided and unfocused opponent. The PRI president and Cabinet could thus dole out political favors at will, while sharing little of the responsibility for constituent representation or decision-making authority.

This should provide an opportunity for the Mexican armed forces to retain their current constabulary role and extra-governmental role in support of the PRI government, while remaining loyal to their nation's constitution. Having sworn loyalty to both the president and the Republic, the leadership of the armed forces could rest assured it was carrying out its patriotic duty in supporting a reinforced PRI presidency, having kept its covenant with the two equally well. The prospect of a PRI-controlled political opposition would not degrade the fealty of the military unless the party, needing a speedy enforcement of its renewed authoritarianism as a reactionary measure, decided to use the armed forces as its enforcer. At that point, the military would be forced to choose between its loyalty to the party and its bond to the

people. It is doubtful the PRI would place the leadership of the armed forces in such a precarious position and risk losing its support. Were the situation that desperate for the PRI, the party would retrench or split as was seen in the first scenarios, resulting in political closure or immobilism. Thus, as a pre-emptive measure, the military can probably be counted on to support the government if the PRI chooses to shift to a more authoritarian mode. This would return PRI politics to the early post-Revolutionary times when political opposition was controlled by the PRI and its leaders envisioned little potential for political puissance.

The third factor of a modernized authoritarian PRI government would be the increased reliance on a "new set of organizations and alliances."[129] A prime example of a modern attempt to expand such incorporation efforts is the *Pronasol*, or Solidarity, movement which uses government-funded self-help programs to galvanize (largely rural) communities into supporting the PRI. While much good has resulted from *Pronasol* initiatives with the building of schools and medical clinics, it is evident that the program is being used for political ends, to revive PRI support in areas which have experienced high voter support for opposition parties. Thus, at least for the present and near future, the PRI fulfills both its corporatist goal of inclusionary government and galvanizes its

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[129] Cornelius and Craig. p. 118.

own position in power. "By reinstating the PRI's role as a welfare machine, *Pronasol* has enabled the PRI to regain its role as the centerpiece of the party system."[130] Such government programs are designed to increase the attractiveness of the PRI to large sectors of the Mexican population, and can be expected to increase dramatically in the coming years, both in terms of government expenditures and political influence.

Cornelius and Craig contend that the political sacrifices required to enforce "a harsh, authoritarian closure"[131] would be virtually prohibitive. It can therefore be assumed that a re-energized PRI would utilize the political gain from such organizations as *Pronasol* to revitalize its political legitimacy, increasing its palatability to the general public. By coopting greater segments of the disaffected civilian sector, the PRI could effectively ensure its hold on the presidency, while having to give up little domestically, at least, in the short term.

The Mexican armed forces are most likely to continue supporting their government's increased investment in such programs as *Pronasol*. Because the military performs an

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[130] Denise Dresser. "Bringing the Poor Back In: Poverty Alleviation and Regime Legitimacy in Mexico." (Princeton Univ. and *Instituto Tecnologico Autonomo de Mexico*; September 1992. Unpublished. p. 2.

[131] Cornelius and Craig. p. 118.

internal, constabulary role in Mexico, its leaders are highly aware of those factors which affect the three sections of its national defense plan. The military sees the beneficial effects of programs designed to maintain social order as helpful in its second mission, quelling internal political movements which are deemed a threat to the state. Specifically, the armed forces will support those programs which are capable of pre-empting military mobilization to combat civil disturbances.

The fourth and final factor of this scenario is the easing of political restrictions. Unlike the scenario of political closure, under modernized authoritarianism the PRI government would not be besieged by a failed economy and would be likely to remain willing and able to participate in the global economy.[132] Under intense international scrutiny, the PRI president and national leaders would doubtless seek to allay the fears of their allies with certain measures such as a deregulation of the media or giving increased attention to alleged human rights violations. A revitalized authoritarian PRI government would arouse world interest, a side effect not desired by the PRI. Not wishing to call attention to itself in

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[132] Reding and Whalen would place the current Mexican government at the modernized authoritarian level, but repeatedly express concern in their paper that the United States is tacitly supporting an administration, and indeed a corrupt government system, which is both repressive to its citizens and will be detrimental to the Republic in the long-run.

its retreat from the democratic reforms so recently praised by the international community, the PRI would continue to keep its armed forces out of the spotlight. A heightened political profile for the military would not serve the purposes of either the PRI or the armed forces as they work together to regain and solidify political hegemony for the party. Consequently, the international expectations of an increased political role for Mexico's military would go unrealized. The leaders of the services can be expected to forego political fame in order to renew their relationship with the PRI as benefactor.

This scenario of modernized authoritarianism is the most realistic of the four in terms of PRI response to loss of hegemony. In terms of its domestic palatability, Mexican political opposition would be forced to assume a less desirable and more controlled role, but one which it might find preferable to the obvious alternatives of political closure or immobilism. The international reaction to increased authoritarianism would also be far less strident than to either of the previous two scenarios. This scenario would also best the previous two in its ease of execution. Assuming the PRI government implements the four factors of this scenario prior to the election or imminent election of a non-PRI presidential candidate, the political costs need not be prohibitive. On the likelihood of the PRI actually resorting

to a modernized authoritarianism, Cornelius and Craig comment,

> There is virtually no evidence to suggest that the majority of PRI leaders accept the idea that their party will cease to be the "party of the state," much less cease to be the governing party. They may endorse a political opening, but (only) without real risk of losing power.[133]

This scenario is also the most likely in that the PRI would not only face diminished political opposition from alternate parties, but also from the military. Prudent implementation of a modernized authoritarian model would not only decrease pressure from the civil sector, but also from a disaffected military with potentially political aspirations. The armed forces could be relied upon for their support of the PRI government, providing troops and weapons were not needed to impose a continued PRI presidency on an unwilling constituency. In terms of maintaining the loyalty of a subordinated military, this scenario remains both more reasonable and more likely to occur than either immobilism or political closure.

D. LIMITED POWER SHARING

This is the most liberal of the four scenarios, and as such would allow for the greatest implementation of democratic reform. Cornelius and Craig refer to the Indian Congress Party

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[133] Cornelius and Craig. p. 119.

model in their explanation of limited power sharing, implying

> a willingness to surrender control of municipal and state governments routinely to the rightist or leftist opposition in their regional strongholds, in the interest of staying in power at the national level.[134]

In this scenario, full political participation would be encouraged for opposition candidates and representatives at the local and state levels. Free and fair elections would permit the selection of opposition hopefuls to any elected seat below the national level. George Philip takes this scenario one step further in his study of Mexico's presidency when he insists that

> real political concessions... have now accumulated to the point where the inner structures of the Mexican state are under pressure as never before. Development of genuinely competitive democracy is, now, a real option.[135]

Philip foresees major changes in Mexico's political power balance, but does not include the military as a player in this impending shift.

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[134] Ibid.

[135] Philip, p. 173. This observation is in keeping with the rest of his chapter, "The Presidency and Political Change." This author believes Philip is overly optimistic for the success of a truly pluralistic democracy in Mexico, and in expecting the PRI leadership to readily accept loss of the presidency, perhaps as early as 1994. p. 176.

Limited power sharing would serve to maintain PRI control of the presidency, much as the modernized authoritarian scenario prescribed, but without the local and regional control mechanisms implicit in that model. This control could be maintained through a plurality of votes, however, rather than having to rely on a majority. Several distinct factors of this scenario are noteworthy.

The first factor of limited power sharing would be its provision for regional differences in levels of PRI support, and accordingly for variances in levels of opposition support as well. In this scenario local, state, and congressional leaders would be freely elected and serve as fully integrated members of the government. As such it is the most inclusionary of the four scenarios, and therefore the most representative of the goals and ideals of the Mexican Revolution. This does not, however, make this fourth scenario the most likely PRI response to a loss of hegemony. It does not sufficiently consider the legacy of authoritarianism inherent in Mexico's modern federal, state, and local government, nor does it weigh the desire for self-preservation intrinsic to the PRI.

The Mexican army, divided into districts which cover the Republic, has built into its structure sufficient autonomy to deal with regional disparities in PRI affiliation and support. Its district commanders may not hold public office, but they are powerful citizens nonetheless. In this scenario elections

are held freely and regularly, and the military is not considered a contender. In reality, however, the reaction of the leadership of the armed forces to such elections, especially when it became apparent that PRI representation at the national level would be insufficient to maintain a plurality within Congress, would be significant. It is not unreasonable to consider an increased political role for the armed forces in certain states and locales where voter support could thus be influenced.

A second factor of this scenario is the inevitability of increased competition between political parties, including the PRI, for voter support. This should breed increased levels of sensitivity to voter needs by the elected representatives and a more responsive government. As competition fosters responsiveness, so responsiveness would foster democratic reform within the PRI. This scenario of limited power sharing, therefore, is self-defeating. Long-term, it does not allow for the denigration of PRI control, but would provide (temporary) political capital for apparent steps toward the loss of PRI hegemony. Meanwhile, "(t)he Mexican regime's longstanding legitimacy and stability has required better-than-average economic growth levels,"[1] but has been unable to maintain

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[1] Riordan Roett. "Mexico and the United States: Managing the Relationship." Mexico and the United States: Managing the Relationship. Riordan Roett (ed). (Westview Press, Boulder; 1988.) p. 8.

such economic or political progress throughout the 1980s. This has added to the decline in legitimacy of the party, which has responded by increasing democratic initiatives in hopes of shoring up its sagging mandate.

The military's response to the democratic reforms inherent in this model can be predicted as negative. Because of the local and state emphasis in this scenario, increased political activism by regional leaders of the military could be expected in response to decreases in PRI support, although this activism would probably neither be shared nor condoned at the national level.

The third apparent factor is the resulting PRI dominance as opposed to hegemony. Some would contend this level of power sharing has already been achieved, and indeed, in several Mexican states it has. Eventually, however, the inability of the PRI to share its ultimate authority, the presidency, would ultimately prove the downfall of this scenario.

The military's reaction to the increasingly embattled PRI federal government would most likely be an increased distance between the two institutions, rather than an increased political activism on the part of the leadership of the armed forces. Mexico's military is ill-equipped to assist its PRI benefactor in hastening its downfall from hegemony to dominance. The armed forces would probably support the more conservative factions of PRI leadership which seek to maintain

their preeminent position.

Overall, the factors of limited power sharing are slowly taking shape and form under the increasing political reforms of the Salinas administration. The first factor is regional variances in PRI support, followed by increased competition and contestation between the PRI and political opposition, which are already apparent. Third is the resulting shift from PRI hegemony to dominance. The PRI leadership at large, however, is likely to prove more conservative than the President has, and the military would probably support a moderate reversal along the political continuum toward modernized authoritarianism. The centralist system, focused on the PRI presidency, which has been perpetuated for over 60 years in the name of the Revolution, will not retain sufficient political power to maintain the nation's focus if the limited power sharing model continues. The scenario is self-defeating, as it allows for opposition participation to a point, but then denies PRI opponents full entrance to the political system.

These four scenarios, ranging from the gridlock of immobilism to the economic and social breakdown of political closure, from the modernization of the PRI authoritarian government to the relatively liberal limited power sharing, are representative of the options facing the PRI as it meets the challenge of losing its political hegemony. This crisis

could present itself within the next twenty years, and could climax in the election, or near-election of a non-PRI candidate to the Mexican presidency.

Currently the Mexican system lies somewhere between the factors of modernized authoritarianism and limited power sharing, and is probably closer to the latter. As the threat of a non-PRI president becomes reality, however, the PRI leadership will be forced to confront options for its political future. Looking at the party's historic and recent record in dealing with its opposition, it is apparent the PRI will probably not allow its final vestige of power to be taken away. This is what makes the study and projection of military responses to the PRI alternatives so crucial. It is most likely that the PRI political machine will attempt to move backward along the power continuum until it reaches a level of modernized authoritarianism which the public will bear. The willingness of the military to support the PRI in the imposition of this retrenchment depends on the combination of factors and level of repression required.

VI. IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S.-MEXICAN RELATIONS

> What is the military's effect on Mexico's domestic and foreign policies? Is it adequately prepared to assure Mexico's stability and security? How would it behave in the event of a serious political or foreign policy crisis? In ordinary, tranquil times these questions can be neglected. But when turns of events arouse U.S. concerns about Mexico's stability, security, and policy behavior - as has been the case for some time now - it becomes important to update and reassess our meager knowledge about the Mexican military.[137]

The issue of political stability for Mexico is paramount as the world enters a new, post-Cold War era. Yet stability need not mean perpetuation of the status quo. Mexico's involvement in twentieth century politics has consistently reflected its commitment to selective and measured response. Social stability and order have always been, and will continue to be, the driving force behind U.S. foreign policy, especially regarding those nations with which we share common borders.

Internally, the inevitable loss of sovereignty that accompanies the lessening of border restrictions and (voluntary) subordination to a mutually-agreed, bi-partisan

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[137] David Ronfeldt. "The Modern Mexican Military: A Time for Reassessment." Armies and Politics in Latin America. Abraham F. Lowenthal and J. Samuel Fitch (eds). (Holmes and Meier, New York; 1986.) pp. 224-225.

authority (Trade boards) will cause friction between Mexico's economics-driven, tecnico-led government and its conservative military forces. The nation's political stability will be an essential factor in the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement, "which is central to the Mexican government's new export-oriented development strategy."[138] The five factors reviewed in Chapter IV could conceivably cause Mexico to undergo a military re-politicization in the 1990s. While this is considered relatively unlikely, the possibility cannot be discounted: Mexican society is moving at a rate and in a political direction which is not likely to be sanctioned by the armed forces. The next 20 years will provide a true test of the strengths of professionalization and subordination achieved over the past 50 years.

A. U.S. INFLUENCE

> In the past Mexico... perceived its national interests and policy objectives not only as not complementary but also at times as directly in conflict with those of the United States. That perception was rooted in a century and half of military, economic, and political conflict with its northern neighbor, as well as in the obvious uneven distribution of power that continues to characterize the Mexican-U.S. relationship today.[139]

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[138] Cornelius and Craig (1991.) p. 118.

[139] Sally Shelton-Colby. "Mexico and the United States: A New Convergence of Interests." Mexico's External Relations in the 1990s. Riordan Roett (ed). Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991. p. 232.

The U.S. history of military intervention in Mexico is well-known, from the annexation of 40 percent of Mexican territory in 1848 to the 1914-17 invasion of Veracruz by U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's troops in what was termed "an affair of honor."[140] The U.S. role has been less dramatic since, and today occupies a diminished role as either military threat or influence. Since shortly after the end of World War II, U.S. focus throughout Latin America has been shaped by the Cold War, and has sought to maintain its hegemony as first outlined in the Marshall Plan. In the early Cold War years, communist containment fervor colored U.S. perceptions of Mexico. Instabilities throughout the region were blamed not on internally instigated nationalism but were viewed by the United States as "the direct result of external Soviet-block instigation" which had to be defeated by "curtail(ing) the alleged expansionism of the Soviet Union."[141]

The Mexican military was significantly influenced by the proximity and strength of the United States armed forces after

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[140] Eric Efrain Matos. "United States National Security and the Republic of Mexico." (Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Ca; 1983.) Unpublished, pp. 28-29. Matos cites Robert E. Quirk, An Affair of Honor: Woodrow Wilson and the Occupation of Vera Cruz. (W.W. Norton Press, New York: 1967.)

[141] Heraldo Munoz. "The Latin American Policy of the Reagan Administration." Latin American Views of U.S. Policy. Robert Wesson and Heraldo Munoz (eds). (Praeger Publishers, New York; 1986.) p. 6.

1941. Previous inspiration had understandably been provided by the Spanish in the early years following Mexico's independence, and the French had inspired most of its 19th century modernization. Nevertheless, after 1917 and the end of the Revolution,

> Mexico developed on very distinctive national lines, its military forces being as uniquely Mexican as its other national institutions. US military assistance during the Second World War and afterwards inevitably caused an increase in the influence of the United States which had hitherto been minimal.[142]

The signing of the Joint U.S.-Mexican Defense Agreement shortly after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor in December, 1941, ushered in a new era of co-operation between the two militaries. Some bases were shared for the training of troops, and some $40 million in military aid was delivered by the United States to enhance Mexican military readiness. The program faded after the war, however, and little remained of the Joint Defense Commission by 1950, although "Mexico continued to send troops to the United States for training, and United States influence appeared in the organizational structure of the Mexican forces."[143]

In the years since, little direct influence has been

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[142] English. p. 322.

[143] Robert Wesson. "Foreign Influences." In Wesson. p. 74.

exerted by the American military on the structure of the Mexico's military, and the country's armed forces have maintained their "independent and nationalist spirit".[144] Nunn states correctly that "(b)oth the internal and external evidence lead one to assert that the Mexican army does not respond in knee-jerk fashion to U.S. influence."[145] For example, Mexico alone refused the U.S. offer to enter into a defense assistance pact, while seven other Latin American nations accepted.[146] Opposing sides were taken by the United States and Mexico concerning the overthrow of Guatemalan President Jacobo Arbenz in 1954, and Mexico condemned the U.S. embargo of Cuba shortly after Castro's takeover in 1959, "provok(ing) considerable exasperation in Washington."[147]

Mexico also condemned U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Panama as immoral and self-serving. In recent years the United States, always viewed by the Mexican military as both its protector and the greatest threat to its national security, has largely exerted leverage through its provision of professional and graduate level training for Mexican officers. The proximity of the U.S. has

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[144] Ibid. p. 74.

[145] Nunn in Ronfeldt (1984). p. 40.

[146] Wesson. p. 74.

[147] Bruce Michael Bagley. "Interdependence and U.S. Policy Toward Mexico in the 1980s." In Roett (1988). p. 223.

undoubtedly contributed heavily to Mexico's commitment "to avoid foreign military influences."[148] This caution in building military (or political) alliances extends to a reluctance to participate in joint operational exercises or other direct professional contact which continues to the present day.[149]

1. Mexican Defense Industry Autonomy

In terms of arms production, indicative of self-reliance or dependence on foreign militaries, since World War II Mexico has sought to maintain autonomy from U.S. influence, especially in small arms production. Although the total unit production of certain systems is relatively low, and the cost per unit therefore higher when relying on domestic manufacturing, the Mexican military and PRI government have felt it prudent to preserve their independence from the United States and other foreign (British, French) arms industries.[150]

Despite the inherently low level of domestic demand, Mexico has actively maintained its own defense industry since the Revolution, not wishing to be beholden to outside technology or shipments from abroad. "No one country may be

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[148] English. p. 322. Also see Gabriel Szekely. "Forging a North American Economy: Issues for Mexico in the 1990s." In Roett (1988). p. 232.

[149] See Zinser's essay in Goodman, Mendelson and Rial.

[150] Wesson, pp. 73-75, and Pineyro in Varas, pp. 115-117, provide further analysis of the Mexican arms industry and their reliance on foreign sales for procurement of both platforms and weapon systems.

said to have a monopoly of the Mexican defence material market."[151] Even with a negligible chance of foreign conflict, the state and military have acted prudently to protect the nation's defense industry from what they consider to be undue external influence. Since "(f)or the foreseeable future, the Mexican armed forces appear to be destined to remain limited to (an) internal security role,"[152] the maintenance of an indigenous defense industrial base may prove more costly in the long-run than perhaps it need have. Had a closer relationship been forged with the United States, Brazil, or other leader in arms technology, Mexico could have spent significantly less on arms. With the absence of external conflicts on the horizon, the concern to prevent a foreign actor from domination of Mexico's limited arms industry appears from the U.S. perspective to have been overstated.

B. IMPLICATIONS OF DESTABILIZATION

The historically negative view of the United States taken by the Mexican government and its military forces must be changed if future relations between the two nations are to focus on economic cooperation and political trust. Meanwhile, the long history of U.S. intervention continues to shape

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[151] English. p. 321.

[152] Ibid. p. 322.

Mexico's foreign and domestic policies.[153]

Mexico is most likely to continue a course of action designed to keep incorporation of public interests central to its doctrine. Not only is this in keeping with the traditions of the Revolution, but it also will allow Mexico to benefit from an increasingly close political and economic relationship with the United States. Assuming Mexico is able to maintain stability and slowly transition to a more pluralistic political system,

> What will be different in the future will be the relationship with the United States - whose government will have much less interest in military-to-military relations,[154]

and a correspondingly increased interest in economic ones.

The United States' reaction to each of Cornelius and Craig's four scenarios would be different. While political closure would not be considered an acceptable alternative to the U.S. government, and the predicted Mexican military response equally distasteful, the economic crisis prompting the implementation of closure is the most worrisome factor

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[153] For a more detailed analysis of Mexico's foreign policy in Central America and the Caribbean, please see the author's recent essay as previously noted.

[154] Mark Falcoff. "Latin America After the Cold War." Latin America: U.S. Policy After the Cold War. Douglas W. Payne, Mark Falcoff, and Susan Kaufman Purcell. (Washington, D.C: America's Society, 1991.) p. 34.

north of the border. A demilitarization of Mexico under these circumstances would well be countered with a reenactment of earlier interventions, as the U.S. might resort to increasingly extreme measures to preserve what it perceives to be lapsing Mexican stability.

The United States would also react negatively to an immobilism in Mexican politics. The potential for a renewed political activism on the part of the armed forces, however, could be the most reliable factor to break the stalemate. In such a case the military would not be viewed as intervening on its own behalf, but rather to restore a functioning government. This scenario might therefore be tolerated, under watchful eyes and in the short-term, by Washington.

A modernization of PRI authoritarianism would prove considerably more tolerable to the United States than the previous two scenarios. Its inherent broadening of political competition, albeit without risking serious political defeat, makes this scenario the closest of the four to Mexico in the 1990s. Relations between the two countries are increasing on all levels, and this *apertura* is unlikely to be slowed by issues such as democratic reform as long as Mexico is perceived as moving toward the western democratic model.

The fourth scenario, limited power sharing, is the most attractive of these likely PRI options for the United States. While the PRI is unwilling to relinquish the presidency even

in this model, this scenario divides political power among the elected freely at local and state levels. It is an unlikely alternative in the long-run, as it is politically self-defeating. In the short-term, however, it is an appealing choice, both for the United States in terms of seeing something close to full democracy realized in Mexico, and to the PRI, which would benefit greatly from renewed political capital.

Tensions are inherent in all relations. The U.S.-Mexican relationship is no different, nor is Mexico's civil-military alliance. The relations Mexico has developed in this second area represent a very different type of association than the United States maintains, but in reality the Mexican and U.S. militaries have far more in common than either shares with the majority of Latin American militaries. It is these commonalities which will assist in the strengthening of relations between Mexico and the United States. Both nations must use this common ground to keep the lines of communication open between the two governments, despite the options which may be chosen by the PRI.

VII. CONCLUSION

This thesis has presented and evaluated four political alternatives for the future of Mexico's PRI and professionalized, depoliticized military. It has argued that while the Mexican armed forces have shunned an active role in politics for over 50 years, their continued reliance on the PRI government for power and prestige cannot remain unchallenged indefinitely. It has also demonstrated that when political change occurs, as it almost surely will within the next 20 years, the military will be left without its benefactor, and will be pressured to seek a new, more active role in the country's politics.

This thesis has also analyzed many of the challenges which will be faced by the Mexico's armed forces as the country's ruling party of 60 years loses its hegemonic position to growing political opposition. This transition from preeminence to dominance will severely strain the military's tradition of loyalty both the PRI and to the nation, and the military will be pressured to take on a more dynamic political role with the demise of its benefactor. This thesis has focused on the political role of Mexico's military, demonstrating through the application of Cornelius and Craig's four scenarios that Mexico's armed forces will resist the temptation to

repoliticize despite internal and external coercion.

Latin American civil-military literature was reviewed and applied to the case of Mexico, followed by a brief history of the Mexican Revolution and the early post-Revolutionary political profile of military leadership. This laid the groundwork for an analysis of both Mexico's potential for and probability of military intervention as the PRI loses political hegemony.

By modifying and applying Cornelius and Craig's four scenarios for political transition to the Mexican military, this thesis has analyzed the scenarios in considerable detail. Each scenario has been broken into its basic factors and the military response to each factor predicted.

The first scenario, Political Closure, remains extremely unlikely. Its inherent economic crisis through failure of the modern, open-market model make the political and social costs of political closure too high for even an intractable PRI leadership. This scenario will remain an extremely unattractive alternative, though the most plausible condition for a military repoliticization.

The factors leading to Immobilism make it a somewhat more plausible scenario. Characterized by political impasse and a government freeze, immobilism effectively stalemates both the PRI and opposition parties. This scenario increases the likelihood of renewed military activism in Mexico, but its

probability, too, will remain relatively remote.

Modernized Authoritarianism, the third scenario, is the most likely PRI response to loss of the presidency. Characterized by PRI retrenchment, it would result in a revitalized PRI, but would throw the military into a quandary. Their most likely response would be to support the PRI unless tasked to physically repress a recalcitrant public. While this thesis establishes modernized authoritarianism as the most plausible government response to the situation posed, it also demonstrates that military repoliticization becomes more likely in the face of political retrenchment. This scenario presents the most likely set of PRI and military responses to an increasingly threatened PRI presidency.

The fourth and last scenario, Limited Power Sharing, proposes political reforms to allow full opposition representation in local and state assemblies, in order to ensure continued PRI hegemony at the national level. This self-defeating scenario carries little increased threat of a military reactivation in Mexican politics.

This thesis has addressed the Mexican military's projected reactions to both democratic reform and political stability as the next 20 years pose a myriad of social, political and economic changes. Unlike so many of her Latin American neighbors, Mexico's armed services have served in an extra-political role for over 40 years, and have little desire to

regain political office. How PRI party leadership chooses to respond to its impending loss of preeminence will, however, influence the future political role of the country's armed forces. For its part, the military leadership will work to ensure a continued depoliticized military with loyalties to both the Constitution and the Republic, but probably with decreased personalistic fealty to the President of Mexico. The long-term symbiotic relationship between the military and the PRI president has provided Mexico's government a strong and loyal right arm to keep order and enforce its policies, while the military has maintained prestige and power without sacrificing professional integrity through political activism. Despite a negligible international military role, Mexico's armed forces have professionalized and maintain a viable domestic military presence, contributing to their unique character.

This thesis has assessed the impending threat to this subordinated role, and briefly addressed the danger posed by the emergence of new and unconventional military threats. The commitment of Mexico's armed services to support the civil government and its evasion of an active political role is, and probably shall remain, unique. Those situations which could conceivably move the Mexican military to abandon its subordinate role have been discussed within the framework of Davies' Relative Deprivation model and applied to Cornelius

and Craig's four scenarios for political transition. From these scenarios, it is apparent that a renewed political role for the Mexican armed forces will remain unlikely unless the PRI, or elements of the party leadership, threaten military subordination by attempting to utilize the armed forces to forcibly retain their hold on the presidency. Too many variables will serve to keep the military sufficiently satisfied with its current, internal role and out of government power. The levels of advanced education, esprit de corps, and loyalty to the ideals of the Revolution will retain the fealty of the leadership of Mexico's armed forces to the Constitution of the Republic. In the end, it is evident that the probability of a military re-politicization in Mexico is, and shall remain, relatively remote.

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